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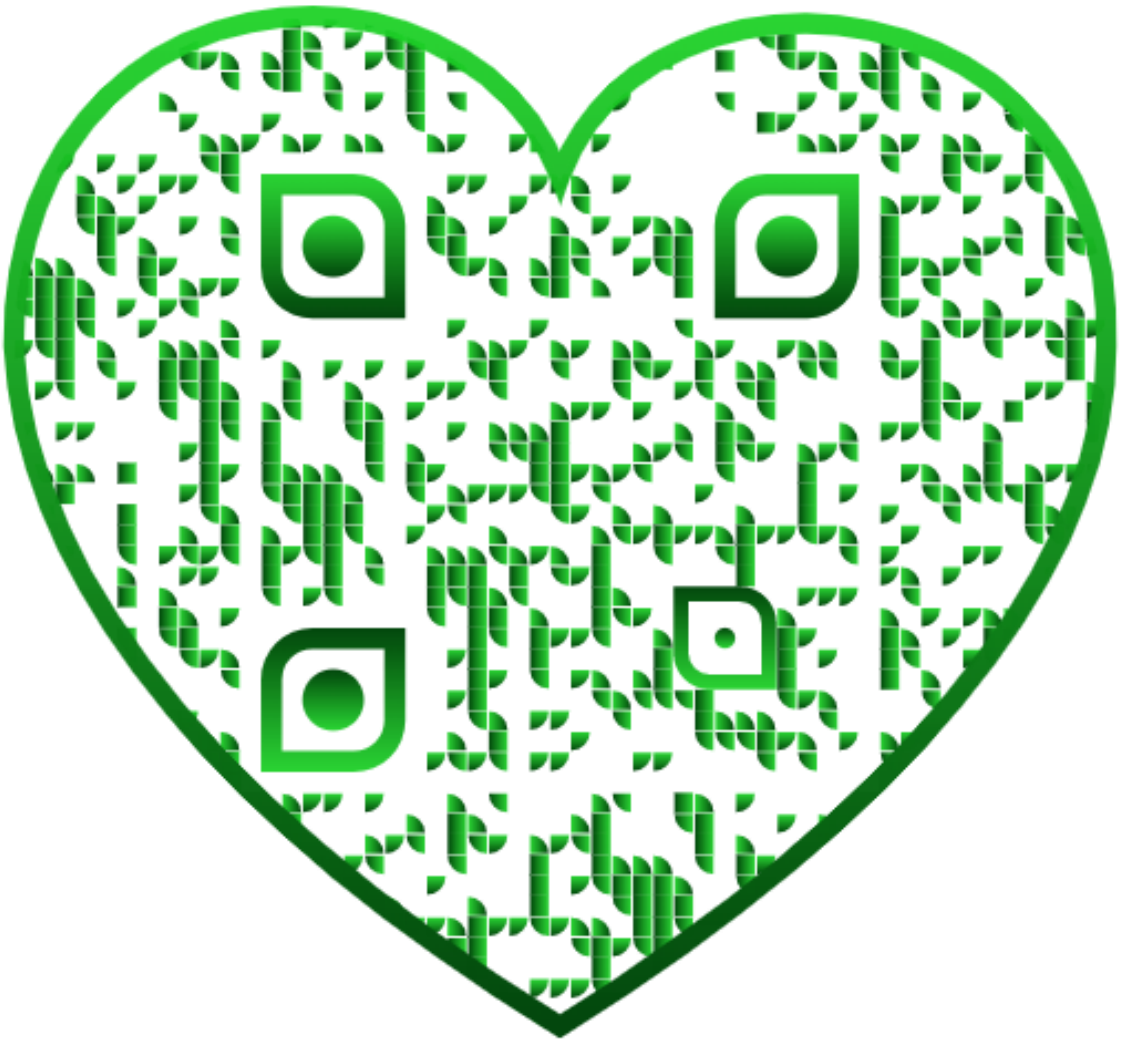

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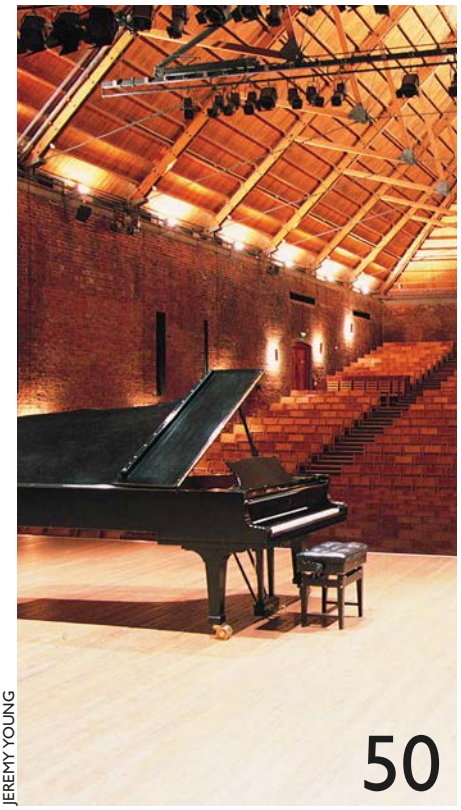
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London WC1N 3QZ
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Published by
Rhinegold Publishing Ltd
Rhinegold House
20 Rugby Street
London WC1N 3QZ

Printed by
Latimer Trend & Company Ltd,
Estover Rd, Plymouth, Devon PL6 7PY

Advertising: 020 7333 1733
Editorial: 020 7333 1748
Email: emt@rhinegold.co.uk
Web: www.earlymusictoday.com
Twitter: @earlymusictoday
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WELCOME

The death of David Bowie in January was – partly because it was completely unexpected, but mostly because of the unique status he had attained during his life – headline news the world over; his fans were especially shocked as Bowie had released his latest album, 'Blackstar', just three days previously, which was quickly heralded as his musical last will and testament.

The knowledge that a particular piece of music (or any artistic endeavour) was crafted even as its creator sensed impending death imbues that work with special significance ever after: we remain haunted by the legends that have grown up around the creation of Mozart's Requiem and Schubert's *Winterreise*, or frustrated by the incompleteness of Dickens' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and Mahler's 10th symphony.

For me, the work that remains the greatest such enigma is Bach's *The Art of Fugue*, which cruelly breaks off just as it appears that the composer is on the verge of achieving contrapuntal apotheosis; instead, while we're left wondering what might have been, our moods and minds are brought back to earth with one of the most gentle and comforting of Bach's chorales, said to have been dictated while he lay on his death-bed.

I interviewed Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt a couple of years ago about her recording of *The Art of Fugue* (*EMT* September–November 2014), and recently I was fortunate to discuss the work with another Bach specialist at the top of her musical game: turn to page 28 to read about violinist Rachel Podger's take on this masterpiece and the experience of recording it with close colleagues.

NEW YEAR, NEW US!

A new year brings with it the chance to freshen things up, and I'm pleased to say that we've made a few small changes to the magazine that I hope will help us to keep you more in tune with what's going on in early music all over the world.

From this issue of *EMT* onwards we're expanding our coverage of early music festivals both in the UK and further afield. We're extremely lucky to have a great tradition of such events that take place throughout the country and not just in London; furthermore, as the cost of international travel has plummeted over the last decade, it has become increasingly easy to attend festivals in other parts of the world. Our regular 'Letter from Abroad' page is testament each issue to how early music is thriving all over the globe, and I hope that our extended Festivals Preview section might inspire you to check out a festival in some far-flung corner of the world.

One other feature that's new this issue is a page highlighting some of the many early music courses that take place all year long. I've attended several such courses in the past, as both student and observer, and it's always cheering to see people from a wide range of backgrounds delight in coming together to explore and make music with complete strangers. Courses can be beneficial to anyone – children in the early stages of learning an instrument, young adults considering further study, young professionals, or amateurs of any age – so whatever your level of ability or area of interest, I'm confident that we'll have something to interest you; if we don't, or if there's a particular course that you're enthusiastic about, do write in and tell us.

ADRIAN HORSEWOOD, ***EDITOR***

SUBSCRIBE TO EARLY MUSIC TODAY **SEE PAGE 57**

A single-manual harpsichord
by Joachim José Antunes, Lisbon, 1785

A fortepiano
by Conrad Graf, Vienna, circa 1820

The Richard Burnett Collection

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FUNDRAISING CONCERT AND NEW RECORDER PIECE FOR THE SOHANA RESEARCH FUND

EMMA MURPHY

Sohana Collins and Emma Murphy

I teach the recorder to a delightful 13 year old girl called Sohana Collins; she is musical, actually practises (every teacher's dream!), always has a smile on her face, and is looking forward to taking her Grade 5 in the summer. What is so remarkable about Sohana is her never-ending enthusiasm and determination despite suffering from constant pain: she has a rare disorder called Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB), a genetic condition which makes her skin blister and tear at even the slightest contact.

EB affects over 8,000 people in the UK and 500,000 in the world, all of whose lives are characterised by the endless application of medication and dressings; internal skin is also affected, which can cause the mouth and throat to blister, making swallowing difficult and eating painful. EB skin damage is irreversible, leading to increasing disfigurement and disability over a lifetime; those who, like Sohana, suffer from the more severe Recessive Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa (RDEB) face their condition worsening over time.

Sohana's parents set up the Sohana Research Fund in 2011 to raise money for research into finding a cure for EB; its 'Tongue Twister Challenge' awareness campaign achieved national prominence last year, when numerous celebrities filmed themselves attempting tongue-twisters to encourage donations. The Fund has primarily focused on gene and cell therapy research and clinical trials in the UK and US. Those involved in the research believe a possible cure is very nearly within reach, but the next stage of research and experimentation requires a large amount of funding.

I have been determined to try to help Sohana and others like her in any way I can. Sohana wears a soft underlayer of clothing covering her entire body beneath her uniform; large, sheepskin-lined boots cover her feet and soft padded gloves cover her hands. The gloves do, however, make playing tricky; to avoid blistering on her eye surface Sohana needs ointment every 30 minutes, which makes seeing the music difficult through gel-smothered eyelashes. Yet, somehow, Sohana manages to produce a beautiful, sweet sound and let her musicality shine through. Things are getting more and more difficult though, as Sohana's fingers progressively curl over and are no longer able to straighten.

The idea came to me to organise a fundraising concert for the Sohana Research Fund. I will be playing the recorder alongside Nicolette Moonen (violin/leader), Anna Curzon (violin), Georgia Browne (flute), Rachel Stott (viola), Gavin Kibble (cello) and Tom Foster (harpsichord), who are all generously giving up their time and talent for this worthy cause.

We will be performing concerti by Telemann, Vivaldi, Bach and Sammartini, as well as a new piece by Rachel Stott, who writes: 'When I heard about Sohana and her remarkable progress on the recorder, I immediately wanted to write a piece for her. So when I read about RDEB and Sohana's brilliant Tongue Twister Challenge, the idea came to me to write a piece incorporating some of the tongue twisters.'

Sohana and her family have a big decision to make this summer: whether Sohana should have an operation to release the contractures in her fingers, or to wait until more scientific advances have been made. Sohana may no longer be able to play the recorder and make that sweet, musical sound again. Please help this not to happen…

Fund-raising concert for the Sohana Research Fund
Thursday 12 May 2016, 7pm
St George's, Hanover Square,
London W1S 1FX

Tickets: £20–100 (depending on what you would like to contribute), available on the door. Other donations can be made on my fundraising page: https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/emmamurphy2

Further details and advanced ticket booking can be made through the Sohana Research Fund website: *www.sohanaresearchfund.org*

EMMA MURPHY

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OVER 70 KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS TO BE AUCTIONED FOR CHARITY

Auctioneers can expect to discover fortepianos among the gems being sold

The Richard Burnett Collection of early keyboard instruments is to be auctioned in aid of the Finchcocks Charity. The collection, which totals over 70 historic instruments, will be sold on 11 May at Dreweatts and Bloomsbury Auctions.

Deputy chairmen of Dreweatts and Bloomsbury Auctions Rupert Powell and Will Richards say 'it is a privilege to be handling the Richard Burnett collection, among the largest and most comprehensive collection of keyboards to come to the market in recent years.'

The collection started over 50 years ago with Burnett, who has gathered some of the highest standard of instruments in the world, including fortepianos, chamber organs, clavichords and harpsichords from the 17th to the 19th century. Particular gems include a 1766 chamber organ by John Byfield, a 1785 single-manual harpsichord by J.J. Antunes, and a c.1820 grand piano by Conrad Graf.

Proceeds from the auction will go towards supporting the charity in training technicians and tuners, keeping the instruments in good condition, and preserving their sound through performance.

THE ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC SEASON STUDDED WITH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The Academy of Ancient Music began its 2016–17 London season on 10 October last year, promising eight wonderful concerts of celebration to mark two special occasions.

The season, which is held at the Barbican Centre, coincides with celebrations for Music Director Richard Egarr's tenth year with the AAM. His direction, a semi-staged production of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* will open the season and a three-year cycle of Purcell operas.

Continuing the season will be early music expert Jordi Savall's AAM debut, who will be directing the ensemble through works by Handel, Lully and Rameau. Tenor James Gilchrist will also be making his directorial debut with works by Bach and Purcell.

The orchestra season is due to close on 23 June for a rendition of Monteverdi's *Vespers* to commemorate the 450th anniversary of his birth, with a classical programme featuring Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. For this performance, the orchestra shall be joined by the Choir of the AAM, with soprano Rowan Pierce, tenors Charles Daniels and Thomas Hobbs, and bass Richard Latham.

Visit *www.aam.co.uk* for further information.

© PATRICK HARRISON

The Academy of Ancient Music at the Barbican.

ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE JOINS THE EUROPEAN EARLY MUSIC NETWORK

St John's Smith Square has joined forces with the *Réseau Européen de Musique Ancienne* (the European Early Music Network) to further promote the profile of early music in London.

As the UK's only concert hall from the Baroque period, St John's Smith Square is dedicated to the output of 17th- and 18th-century music. Coupled with REMA, which was created in Ambronay in France and boasts a membership of around 70 early music companies in 21 different companies, the relationship is set to be fruitful.

'REMA is committed to the performance and representation of early music across Europe,' said St John's Smith Square Director Richard Headon. 'As we at St John's continue to develop our programme of historically informed performance, it is of enormous benefit to enjoy such close connections with partners and promoters from right across Europe.'

To further the outreach of early music across Europe, REMA connects organisations through several meetings a year, developing internal connections, as well as organising biannual European showcases for young talent within the industry.

www.sjss.org.uk; www.rema-eemn.net

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BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL SCOOPS GRAMMY NOMINATION FOR THE FIFTH TIME

The Boston Early Music Festival has been nominated a fifth time for Best Opera Recording in the 2016 GRAMMY Awards.

The nominated recording of Agostino Steffani's *Niobe, Regina di Tebe* comes a year after the BEMF won in the same category for Charpentier's *La Descent d'Orphée aux Enfers*. The nomination is shared by BEMF artistic directors Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, producer Renate Wolter-Seevers, and lead soloists Karina Gauvin and Philippe Jaroussky. The recording has already received critical acclaim and several awards from around the world, including winning the Diapason d'Or and ECHO Klassik Awards in 2015 and being nominated for a Gramophone Award.

Boston is home to three other classical music ensembles to have received nominations in this year's GRAMMYs: Boston Baroque (for their recording of Monteverdi's opera *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*), the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project.

BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Paul O'Dette and Stephen Stubbs, BEMF artistic directors

UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD WINS MAJOR AWARDS FOR £3.5M ANCIENT MUSIC RESEARCH PROJECT

The University of Huddersfield has won major awards for a project researching and originating contemporary music and rediscovering sounds from the past. The recordings, which feature instruments dating as far back as the Bronze Age, will soon be issued by an internal label.

Dr Rupert Till, a reader in music with specialisms that include sound archaeology, is a member of the team heading the European Music Archaeology Project, which also seeks to create an exhibition using advanced visual and audio technology.

The university also poses as a venue for a series of masterclasses that coincide with the EMAP. Opening the series was trombonist and composer John Kenny with his concert at St Paul's Hall entitled 'Dragon's Voices – the Ancient Celtic Music of the Carnyx'. As well as performing and composing, Kenny is a leading exponent of the earliest brass instruments in history.

'To understand the music of ancient Europe is to understand our common European heritage, because this ancient music crossed borders,' said Till of the purposes of the EMAP. 'Understanding our past helps us understand ourselves. It's important to try and understand issues of migration and the music and culture of the past.'

The EMAP exhibition will begin touring in June this year in Sweden and comes to the UK at the start of 2018, beginning in the National Museum of Wales.

The University of Huddersfield

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The National Opera Studio exists to train a small group of highly talented musicians to become the leading artists of their generation. In this very special recital introduced by Nicky Spence, the studio will present a selection of this year's gifted singers and répétiteurs, offering a glimpse at the next generation of leading artists.

This concert is followed by an informal Q&A which will be conducted by Ashutosh Khandekar, editor of *Opera Now* magazine.

© SIM CANETTY-CLARKE

Katya Apekisheva & Charles Owen (piano)
Tuesday 26 April 2016

Katya and Charles are both professors of piano at the Guildhall School of Music and have established a long-running piano duo partnership, recording duo versions of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and *Petrushka* together. Join us as we delve in to the rich sound world of piano duet music and explore just some of the vast array of works on offer.

This concert is followed by an informal Q&A which will be conducted by Owen Mortimer, editor of *International Piano* magazine.

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THE ORCHESTRA OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT APPOINTS JOHN BUTT OBE AS PRINCIPAL ARTIST

© DAVID BARBOUR

New OAE Principal Artist John Butt OBE

Award-winning musician John Butt OBE has been appointed Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Having held the Gardiner Chair of Music at the University of Glasgow since 2001, Butt has a huge variety of accolades beneath his belt, including guest conducting with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and becoming founding director of the chorus King's Voices, as well as being music director of the Dunedin Consort.

As a leading conductor, organist, harpsichordist and scholar, the OAE feels Butt will bring much to their richly textured group. 'Butt joins us at an exciting time in the OAE's history,' confirms Chief Executive Crispin Woodhead. 'The new season sees the launch of a five-year focus on J.S. Bach, led by John's unique knowledge of the latest research and performance practice.'

Of his new appointment, Butt says, 'It is a huge honour, given the very distinguished names who hold or have held this position over the years, and it's a great responsibility to uphold the artistic integrity of the group.'

Butt co-curated and will direct an all-Bach programme on 10 March at St John Smith Square; part of the OAE's Southbank season, the programme 'promises to shed extraordinary new light on this well-loved composer,' Woodhead confirms.

MUSIC AT WOODHOUSE ANNOUNCES 2016 PROGRAMME

Monika Saunders, Artist Director of Music at Woodhouse, has revealed the 2016 programme, which looks to be expanding its baroque repertoire and adding new textures to an already rich company.

Johann Adolf Hasse

On offer later this year are three baroque operas: Lully's *Armide* on 20–21 February, a double-bill of Hasse's *Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* on 4–5 June, all with the Baroque Opera Academy; the last opera of the year is Puccini's *La bohème* on 10–11 September with the Opera Festival.

'This year at Woodhouse we are offering three baroque operas, all with a poignant theme of tragic queens in antiquity,' confirms Saunders. 'The intimate, sometimes candlelit playhouse inside the hall creates a very special atmosphere for the singers and the period ensemble to tell their stories.'

Bookings can be made at *www.musicatwoodhouse.com*

CHETHAM'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC HOSTS ENGLISH BAROQUE PROJECT

The first English Baroque Project was held in Chetham's School of Music, in association with Chetham's Library and the Early Music Shop in a collaboration that aimed to provide a unique platform for young early music performers.

The project was led by Dr Martyn Shaw, historical performance specialist, who wanted to lay focus on the style of music present during the late baroque period, with works by Thomas Arne, George Frideric Handel and Edward Purcell.

www.chethams.com

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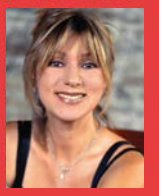
Radio Notes

***Lucie Skeaping** shares highlights from Brighton Early Music Festival on the* Early Music Show



As presenter of the *Early Music Show* I visit quite a few festivals each year; there's a lot of good quality music being performed all over the UK and we always enjoy deciding what we want to record for the programme. One of our regular destinations is the Brighton Early Music Festival whose imaginative programming, under the creative eye of tireless director Deborah Roberts, never fails to delight our listeners.

The festival theme last autumn was certainly timely: 'Women Composers', and although (for every possible reason) the pool is comparatively small, Deborah came up with a fascinating work which is not only regarded as the first opera to be composed by a woman, but also appears to be a proto-feminist satire.

La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola di Alcina was written by Francesca Caccini and, interestingly, was the result of a commission by another woman – the Archduchess Maria Magdalene who, following the death of her husband Cosimo II, ruled as regent though most of the 1620s.

Francesca Caccini, the daughter of the composer and great singing teacher Giulio Caccini, was appointed to the court in 1607. Dubbed 'La Cecchina' ('The Songbird') by her admirers (Monteverdi among them), by 1620 she had become the highest paid composer at the Medici court, providing music for multi-media spectacles alongside ravishing sacred and secular motets which show great quality and extraordinary attention to detail.

Sadly, *Ruggiero* is the only one of her 16 known stage works to survive complete; it's a powerful allegory on female power, its witty content designed to allay fears of the consequences of female rule! We meet Ruggiero as he languishes, stupified by his love for the wicked sorceress Alcina, and when he finally sees the light and tries to escape we witness Alcina's rage as she sets the whole place on fire. But of course it all ends happily with much celebration and dancing to more of Caccini's glorious music.

Naturally I was a tad disappointed to hear that BREMF's budget couldn't stretch to a re-creation of the horse ballet that apparently closed the original 1625 Medici production, but the soloists Nick Pritchard, Anna Devlin and Denis Lakey more than make up for it, along with sackbuts, lirone and viols and some dazzling baroque violin playing.

This is an exciting performance of a rare work so grab yourself a radio and a comfy chair and enjoy the magic.

La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola di Alcina will be broadcast on the *Early Music Show* on on Sunday 6 March at 2pm.

Follow Lucie on Twitter (@lucieskeaping) to keep up with the latest news from the Early Music Show; *www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/earlymusicshow. All broadcast details correct at time of press.*

UP& COMING

EDDIE MCMULLAN

BEN MCKEE

Sharp-eyed EMT readers may have spotted that Eddie McMullan has appeared in these pages before – indeed, in this very column: he is the countertenor in the vocal ensemble Eo Nomine, featured in our September–November issue last year.

Already a permanent lay clerk of the choir of Westminster Cathedral in London and a regular performer with many of the country's leading professional groups, McMullan has just added another feather to his cap by joining The Sixteen as a core member, the first singer from the Genesis scheme to do so.

'[When] I asked Eddie to become a regular member of The Sixteen,' said Harry Christophers, 'I was delighted that his answer was an unreserved "yes" followed by "Can I tell my mum or is it under wraps for a few days?" Eddie was one of the hand-picked singers for the first ever Genesis Sixteen in 2011 and he absolutely embodies what we are trying to teach young singers through Genesis – he combines excellent skills in ensemble singing with being a good team player and colleague and contributes to every element of the group. He personifies what Genesis Sixteen is all about.'

McMullan commented: 'I am absolutely thrilled to have been appointed as a full member of The Sixteen. Not only do I get to make amazing music with this special ensemble on a very regular basis, but I am doing so with the most wonderful group of people.

'What added to my sense of achievement is the way in which it all came about. After being a member of the inaugural year of Genesis Sixteen, I had the opportunity to sing as a deputy with the main choir. Luckily, this became more and more regular, and now here I am – a full-time member.

'I wouldn't be here if it weren't for the training I had from Harry and Eamonn, for which I thank them, and the exceptional generosity of John Studzinski and his Genesis Foundation.'

ADRIAN HORSEWOOD

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To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary, Ex Cathedra – in partnership with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, the Shakespeare Institute, and in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company – has commissioned a new Shakespeare Ode from the Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy, and composer Sally Beamish.

There will be performances in Shakespeare's church in Stratford-upon-Avon (22 Apr), in Birmingham (24 Apr), Hereford (6 May), Wolverhampton (7 May), London (12 May) and Southwell (28 May).

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COMPETITIONS

Keep up to date with the latest winners and deadlines of early music competitions across the globe

RESULTS

CLARE PARK

Winner Anna Harvey

LONDON BACH SOCIETY BACH SINGERS PRIZE

Mezzo soprano Anna Harvey has won the 5th LBS Bach Singers Prize, the final of which was held at St John's Smith Square on 13 November. A graduate of the RAM and Jesus College, Cambridge, Harvey was awarded £2,000, while the three runners-up – sopranos Rosie Lomas and Louise Wayman, and tenor Hiroshi Amako – each won £500.

MOECK/SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS SOLO RECORDER PLAYING COMPETITION

The climax of this biennial competition took place at the Old Royal Naval College as part of the Greenwich International Early Music Festival and Exhibition, with four female foreign finalists fighting it out for first place. This unusual occurrence – normally only three players make it through to the Moeck final – indicated how strong the competition was, and after four performances of a very high standard Laura Schmid (the 2013 runner-up) was adjudged the winner, and will give a solo recital at the 2016 Greenwich festival; Lea Sobbe came second, Sophia Schambeck third, and Silvia Berchtold fourth.

BAMPTON CLASSICAL OPERA YOUNG SINGERS COMPETITION

The second incarnation of Bampton Classical Opera's competition for singers aged between 21 and 30 was won by Russian soprano Galina Averina, who is currently studying at the Benjamin Britten Opera School at the RCM; Welsh soprano Céline Forrest, an RAM graduate currently a young artist at the National Opera Studio, was the runner-up.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

EARLY MUSIC AMERICA'S MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE COMPETITION

Details The competition will showcase some of the brightest up-and-coming North American performers of music from between 1000 and 1600.
Eligibility Applicants must be ensembles (minimum two people) formed less than five years ago, limited to repertoire of the medieval and Renaissance periods, with an average age of 35. Performers must be members of Early Music America, and must be resident in the US or Canada.
Deadline 15 April 2016.
Competition dates 1 October 2016.
Location Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, Maryland, USA.
Prizes First prize – US$2,500 plus engagements across the US in the 2017–18 or 2018–19 season; media coverage, PR coaching, broadcast opportunities. Second prize – US$1,500. Audience prize – US$500.
Contact info@earlymusicamerica.org
Web www.earlymusicamerica.org

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION 'MUSICA ANTIQUA'

Details This year's instalment of one of the world's longest running early music competition is for fortepianists, focusing on the repertoire of Mozart and the sons of J.S. Bach. The president of the jury is Johan Huys; the other members are Piet Kuijken, Alexei Lubimov, Christine Schornsheim and Bart van Oort.
Eligibility Open to performers born after 31 December 1983.
Deadline 29 April 2016.
Competition dates 3–10 August 2016.
Location Bruges/Brugge, Belgium.
Prizes Cash prizes for first, second and third places; the winner will be invited to perform at festivals including MAFestival, Bozar Music Brussels and Musikfestspiele Sansoucci Potsdam; additionally, he or she will have the chance to record a disc on the Alpha Productions label.
Contact competitions@mafestival.be
Web www.mafestival.be

GESUALDO SIX COMPOSITION COMPETITION

Details Currently Young Artists at St John's Smith Square, the Renaissance vocal ensemble the Gesualdo Six are launching a composition competition. 2016 marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death and the 450th anniversary of Gesualdo's birth; words by the former and texts set by the latter are among the texts available to be set, alongside poems by Christina Rossetti and Emily Brontë.
Eligibility Open to all composers, divided into those aged 18 and under, and those aged 19 and over.
Deadline 15 April 2016.
Competition dates The winning works will be premiered by the group on 19 June 2016.
Location St John's Smith Square, London.
Prizes As well as the premiere performances, the winning works will be considered for publication by Novello & Co Ltd, and a prize fund of £1,000 is available.
Contact Owain Park, director of the Gesualdo Six
Web www.thegesualdosix.co.uk

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Vivaldi – Violin Concerto 'Per la Santissima di Maria Vergine' RV581
Albinoni – Oboe Concerto Op.9, No.2
Vivaldi – Sinfonia 'Al santo Sepolcro'
Ferrandini – Il Pianto di Maria

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Christian Curnyn

Christian Curnyn *guest director/harpsichord*

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Haydn – Symphony No.44 ('Trauer')
Rameau – Suite from Les Boréades
Mozart – Symphony No.29

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COURSES

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RECORDERS FOR ALL EASTER COURSE

Details Participants will be able to play a range of repertoire in both small and large groups; there will be a 'classic' recorder orchestra, a film orchestra and a one-to-a-part chamber orchestra. Each day will start with a choice of classes on particular aspects of music or technique, followed by a varied selection of ensembles. All course participants must be able to play at least two sizes of recorder to Grade 3 standard. The Recorders for All Summer Festival runs 26–28 August in Cheltenham; see website for more information.
Deadline 12 February 2016; late entries may be accepted.
Course dates 31 March–7 April 2016.
Location The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire.
Contact jan.epps57@gmail.com
Web www.recordersforall.org.uk

REAL ROOTS! WITH PIVA

Details A weekend of music-making to discover the world of 16th-century popular music with members of Piva; you'll be exploring music from the inns, playhouses and village greens and learning how to adapt it to suit your own style. The programme will include ensemble playing, making and developing arrangements, singing catches and rounds, and improvisation. The course is suitable for players of woodwind and strings, as well as players of more unusual instruments (e.g. bagpipes, hurdy-gurdy, nyckelharpa).
Deadline 1 May 2016.
Course dates 20–22 May 2016.
Location Halsway Manor, near Crowcombe, Somerset.
Contact office@halswaymanor.org.uk
Web www.halswaymanor.org.uk

DARTINGTON INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL & FESTIVAL

Details This is Joanna MacGregor's second summer in charge at Dartington, and she continues to attract world-class musicians to teach and perform. As is customary, the first two weeks of five are laden with early music. In Week 1 the City Musick, along with playwright Peter Oswald, run a course on 'Shakespeare and Theatre', Emma Kirkby and David Miller direct a Dowland project, and members of Stile Antico lead rehearsals and a performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. Baroque music takes over in the second week: Margaret Faultless directs Purcell's *Dido and Æneas* and Frederick Lampe's *Pyramus and Thisbe*, and Jane Glover conducts Handel's *Alexander's Feast*; contralto Hilary Summers works with principals from the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in courses on vocal and baroque practice. Bursaries are available.

Dartington Hall, Devon

Deadline 31 March 2016.
Course dates 30 July–27 August 2016.
Location Dartington Hall, Devon.
Contact summerschool@dartington.org
Web www.dartington.org/whats-on/summer-school

CAMBRIDGE EARLY MUSIC SUMMER SCHOOLS

Details Cambridge Early Music runs two residential study weeks each year, one on baroque music and the other on Renaissance repertoire. This year's theme for CEM's two courses is 'Un sabor de España' ('A Taste of Spain'): the baroque course explores music from the Spanish-held domains in Naples and the Netherlands; then the Renaissance course concentrates on music associated with Ferdinand and Isabella, 'Los Reyes Católicos'. Bursaries are available.
Deadline 30 June 2016.
Course dates 31 July–7 August and 7 August–13 August 2016.
Location Jesus College, Cambridge, UK.
Contact info@cambridgeearlymusic.org
Web www.cambridgeearlymusic.org

NATIONAL YOUTH RECORDER ORCHESTRA

Details NYRO's popular summer course offers younger players aged 12 and over the chance to play in orchestras and ensembles, give a public concert and make a professional recording. The training ensemble, NYTRO, is for players of a good Grade 5 standard; the main ensemble, NYRO, requires a minimum Grade 8 standard. Places will be offered following live auditions, which will be held at NYRO Recorder Days around the country (except London).
Deadline 5 June 2016.
Course dates 31 July–6 August 2016, plus travel time either side.
Location Landesakademie für Jugendbildung, Weil der Stadt, Germany.
Contact admin@nyro.org.uk
Web www.nyro.org.uk/taking-part/summer-course

NORVIS EARLY MUSIC SUMMER SCHOOL

Details The course is for those interested in all aspects of early music, and caters for performers of all ages and experience. There are classes for recorder, viol (solo bass and consort), lute, baroque strings, harpsichord and singing. Tutors include course director Ralph Woodward (harpsichord), Alan Davis (recorder), Alison Kinder (viol), Martin Eastwell (lute) and Oliver Webber (baroque strings). Bursaries are available.
Deadline Discounts on tuition fees are available to those who apply before 1 April.
Course dates 30 July–6 August 2016.
Location College of St Hild and St Bede, Durham.
Contact enquiries@norvis.org.uk
Web www.norvis.org.uk

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INTERNATIONAL RAMEAU ENSEMBLE

Lawrence Olsworth-Peter can pinpoint with complete accuracy the moment in which he first experienced the music of Rameau. 'It was when I was a postgraduate student at the Royal Academy of Music about five years ago, and I happened to hear a recording of *Zoroastre*; I fell in love with it straight away.'

What spurred him into action was the arrival of the 250th anniversary of Rameau's death in 2014, and the resurgence of interest in the composer and his music. 'French baroque music hasn't always been the most accessible repertoire in this country,' he says.

'Quite naturally, the artists leading the way are the French groups like Les Arts Florissants and Les Talens Lyriques – but they hardly ever come over to the UK to perform, and while there have been several British groups who have done sterling work in French baroque music, it has never quite achieved the popularity of music of the same period from England, Germany and Italy. In the end, I decided that if I wanted to hear this wonderful music being performed in the UK during Rameau year, the thing to do was to perform it myself!'

Thus, the International Rameau Ensemble made its debut at St George's Hanover Square in February 2014, performing a selection of the composer's *grands motets*; this success spurred Olsworth-Peter into considering how best to preserve this momentum and carry on what he had started.

'I was keen from the very beginning to have an educational focus alongside performing – I wanted to bring together students and young professionals with experts in French baroque music. We came up with the idea of a summer school which would be a mix of lessons, coaching sessions and masterclasses, all rounded off by a public performance. We were very lucky to get violinist Catherine Mackintosh and harpsichordist Robert Aldwinckle on board, and the first International Rameau Summer School took place in July 2014 at Trinity Laban in Greenwich.'

The next step in the journey took place when Olsworth-Peter heard Les Talens Lyriques in Rameau's *Les Indes galantes* at the Barbican Centre in London under their charismatic director, harpsichordist Christophe Rousset. I approached him and asked if he would consider coming to London to teach and to work with young performers in the music of Rameau. I was amazed and delighted when he agreed to lead the 2015 summer school; he was a brilliant communicator, and with such a breadth of experience he was able to convey different things to different people, according to their instrument and level of experience.'

I was keen from the very beginning to have an educational focus alongside performing – I wanted to bring together students and young professionals with experts in French baroque music

To build on their work so far and bring Rameau to even wider audiences, Olsworth-Peter and the IRE have launched their 'Founding Friends' scheme: their aim is to find just 25 Rameau-loving supporters to help them put the summer schools and concerts on a firm financial footing and further the cause of French baroque music in the UK.

And what lies ahead? 'We've just performed a concert of staged opera excerpts, which was our first time collaborating with Dionysios Kyropoulos – he's studying for a DPhil at Oxford in historical stagecraft. We're planning to work with him to put on a complete staged production by 2017 or '18 – *Anacréon* and *Pygmalion* are high on the list of possibilities – and he'll also be one of the coaches on the 2016 summer school.

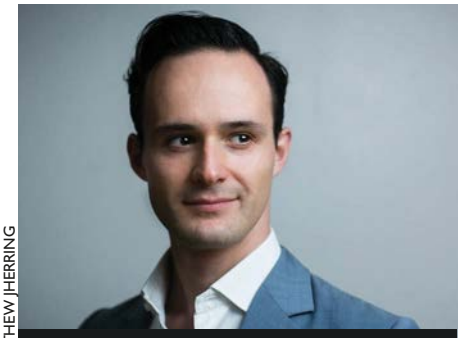
'We want to present the best and most thrilling performances we can, backed up by academic research; authenticity is important to us, but also that the music should be accessible by anyone. '

The third International Rameau Summer School is planned for late August to early September this year; for more information, visit: www.rameau.eu

ADRIAN HORSEWOOD

ANDREA LIU

International Rameau Summer School 2015



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LETTER FROM ABROAD

CAMPANIA

Dear *EMT,*

Don Carlo Gesualdo's newly-restored castle with its pale local limestone gleamed in the autumn sun and we seemed in another world from that of the allegedly crazed composer whose home it had been. The occasion was a grand reopening of the building which dominates the modest town of Gesualdo, set among the rolling hills, olive groves and vineyards of Campania, about an hour's drive north of Naples.

Guest of honour was Marie Stravinsky whose grandfather had done so much to put Gesualdo's music before the public. Also present and speaking at the event were the English musicologist Joseph Knowles, composer Emmanuele Torrente and the directors of the three existing Gesualdo Consorts: Harry van der Kamp from Amsterdam, Marco Berrini from Milan and myself from London. Performing the madrigals, courtesy of the Danish embassy, were Bo Holten and his virtuoso ensemble Musica Ficta.

Happily, the state of the building is now very much at odds with the sadly-neglected building Igor Stravinsky described so atmospherically back in the 1950s, and has been transformed from the virtual ruin that Werner Herzog portrayed in his film *Death for Five Voices*. (To be fair, by the time Herzog arrived, the major earthquake of 1980 in the region had severely damaged not only the castle but the whole town, much of which has also been faithfully restored.)

Work on the castle is still in progress and the main rooms above the courtyard at the back of the building were tantalisingly closed up when we were there. What was very clear was the modest scale of the whole place: the performances at the opening had to take place in the courtyard against the famous portico engraved with the composer's name, and there did not appear to be any rooms that would accommodate more than a handful of performers and a minimal audience, if any. The church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, where the sacred music would have been performed, is likewise small in scale.

Most fascinating is the fact that the room where Gesualdo installed his own printing press has been identified. Entry is from the ramp up to the castle: definitely a tradesman's entrance. He set up his own press to supervise the accurate publishing of his complicated and unexpected scores and, indeed, his madrigals were the first vocal music to be printed in score as well as in parts – an innovation at the time. One can imagine the printers standing to attention there awaiting the Prince's inspection of the latest proof! The new edition of Books V and VI of the madrigals has been printed in Gesualdo, continuing the tradition, but not as yet in the very room where they were first produced.

Giuseppe Mastrominico, who has overseen the whole project, and is an expert on the history of both town and composer, was keen to temper some of the myths about Gesualdo. It seems he was a beneficent ruler, at odds with the *grand-guignol* traditions, having installed elaborate water-courses for the townspeople and also having the environs of the castle rebuilt in a concentric circular plan to ensure everyone in the town benefitted from an equal amount of sunlight.

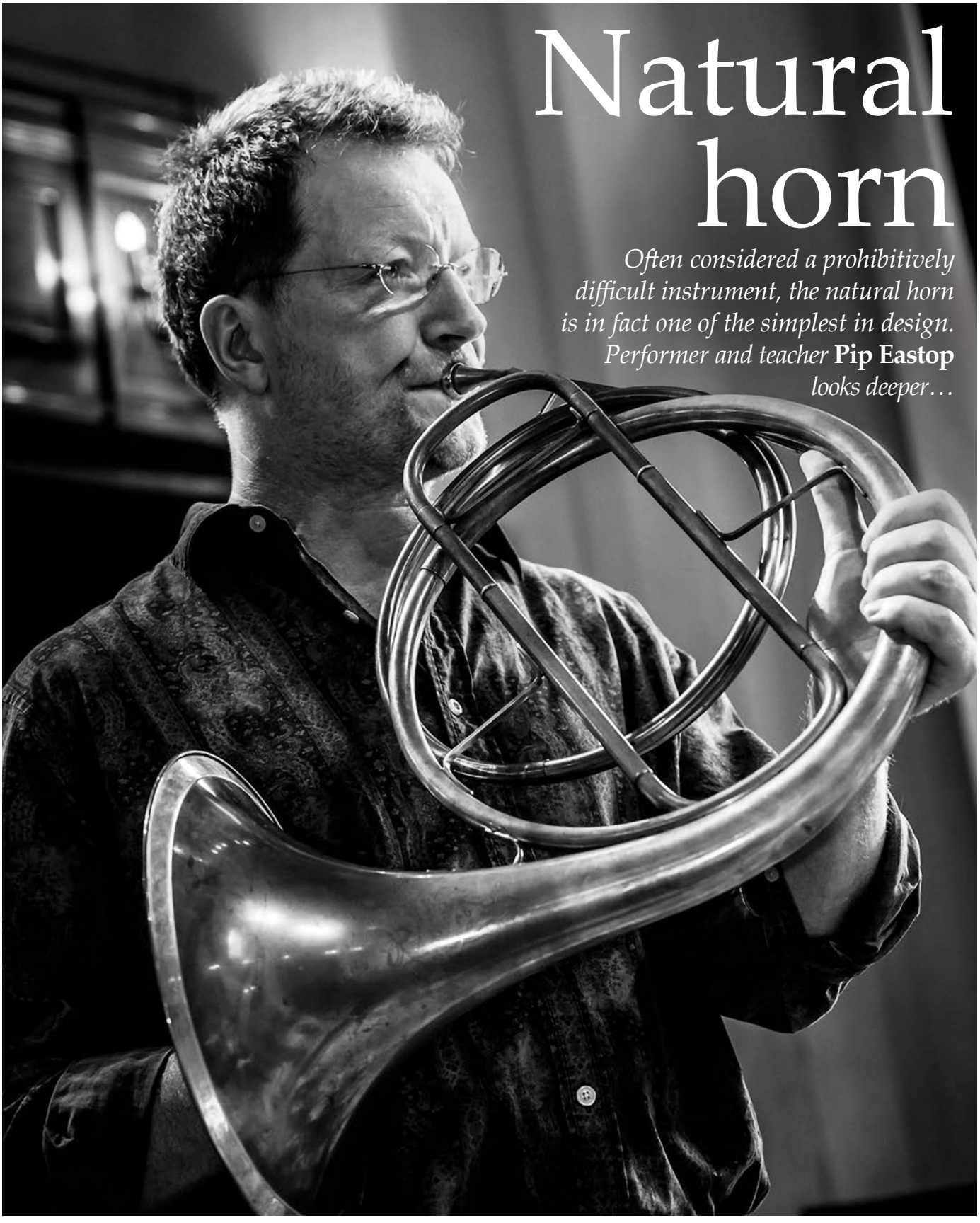
So the celebrations definitely accentuated the positive. It was an event for politicians, dignitaries, scholars and the townspeople themselves. Speeches varied in brevity, suitability and language. A room was dedicated to Stravinsky in what is to become a study centre. But the most revealing moment was the sound of Gesualdo's late madrigals expertly performed in the twilight surrounded by the terracotta-coloured walls of the palace courtyard and to know that these very notes would have been heard here some 400 years ago.

GERALD PLACE
Founding director of the Gesualdo Consort of London; www.gesualdoconsort.co.uk

The newly-restored castle in the beautiful town of Gesualdo

Natural horn

Often considered a prohibitively difficult instrument, the natural horn is in fact one of the simplest in design. Performer and teacher **Pip Eastop** *looks deeper…*



GRAHAM SALTER

ROOTS

As a player of the modern horn I was a late convert to the delights of the classical hand horn. It took a friend and colleague of mine many attempts at persuasion, and the one that finally got me was when he said, 'It will put you in touch with your roots as a horn player.' This compelled me to borrow an instrument and get to work on it. I'm so glad I did, because I absolutely love playing classical natural horn and would recommend that every horn player also get in touch with his or her roots.

THE NATURAL HORN

The word 'natural' here refers to the way this instrument emulates the kinds of horns found in nature; these can be animal horns, large seashells or even hollow wooden branches. Although the concept of the natural horn was originally inspired by nature, the combination of metalworking skills in the classical period and the malleability and durability of the metal alloy known as brass allowed the creation of much longer instruments than nature ever provided.

The natural horn is a long, conical brass tube narrow at the end into which one blows, and which gets progressively wider along its entire length until it terminates in a 'bell', from which the sound emerges. For convenience, the tubing is looped into a neat circle.

THE HARMONIC SERIES

It resonates beautifully but only at a few very specific frequencies. In other words the instrument will only allow a small number of notes to be played – between eight and 16, depending on the length or key of the instrument.

Mozart liked to write for natural horn in E flat, for example, which is about 14 feet long and has about 16 notes. In practical terms a longer horn allows a greater number of tones to be played. The pitches of these are dictated by the highly complex mathematics of acoustical physics which govern the frequency at which the air contained within a horn can resonate to produce stable tones. The resulting attractive sequence of harmonics is known as the 'harmonic series' and is a natural phenomenon which I like to think of as a kind of audible rainbow, in which the lowest two notes (red and orange) are spaced a whole octave apart and the higher notes are progressively closer together. By the time you arrive at the 16th and 17th harmonics they are as close together as one semitone and are rather high and hard to play.

It is a great pity that this instrument, with its heart-stopping sound has, to our modern ears, a lot of notes 'missing'. Arpeggio? No problem – although, sadly, only one. Scales? One or two but nothing very convincing. Chromatic scale? Not a chance – certainly not with only a handful of widely spaced notes! These are, however, so ravishingly lovely that we work with what there is.

During the 1800s, as clever inventors and designers sought and found new ways to combine natural horns together into what might be called compound horns, the original single-length natural horn was virtually abandoned. During a process much akin to evolution and natural selection, the modern horn was born.

I absolutely love playing classical natural horn and would recommend that every horn player also get in touch with his or her roots

THE MODERN HORN

If you want a horn to be capable of playing anything and everything the trick is to combine twelve differently lengthed natural horns together so they share the same narrow blowing end and the same flared sounding end. You then add ingenious metal valves for switching between each of these horns. After this it is a matter of waiting while generation after generation of brilliant horn designers and makers battle it out to achieve the most efficient, economical and ergonomic design. As a result of that long process we can rejoice in the miracle of the modern horn.

In theory it would be possible for a beginner to start out with the natural horn and learn to play it with great expertise, but I think this would result in a sad life for a modern musician. During the 1800s, composers were reacting to the gradual development of the modern horn by writing music which immediately exploited its exciting new possibilities and from then, those new horn parts were not playable on the natural horn. A player of the modern instrument has the keys (both figuratively and literally) to almost 200 years of music written since the hand horn was superseded. It can truly be said that with a modern horn one can play anything at all, and this includes music from the Classical period or before.

PROGRESS?

As in many instances of progress and modernisation, some qualities can be left behind and forgotten. The old natural horns had certain characteristics and subtleties of nuance that were lost when the modern instruments swept them aside. Without the addition of the modern horn's valves and plumbing the simple, single-length ancestral horn feels very light and vibrant. Its harmonics seem truer and somehow less compromised, its tone purer, more wholesome and 'organic'.

One might think there is no going back, but this is apparently not the case. These days there are many makers of new natural horns, most of them thriving and continuing the work of their predecessors in still seeking the perfect tapers, proportions and construction. There are orchestras springing up everywhere which need horn players who play instruments as close as possible to those known by composers from the distant past. There are new audiences hungry to hear as much authenticity and integrity as possible in performances of the greatest compositions from the classical period.

Thankfully, the natural horn today is at least as alive as it was when its brilliant child, the modern horn, branched off into new territory.

Pip Eastop's recording of Mozart's horn concertos and quintet, made using natural horn, was released last year on Hyperion.

FESTIVALS PREVIEW

Spring is coming, the days are getting longer… Here's a selection of festival delights to tempt you out of your winter hibernation

LONDON HANDEL FESTIVAL, 8 MARCH–11 APRIL

The 2016 festival marks both the end and beginning of era: it's the first held after the death of Denys Darlow, who founded the festival in 1978, and will be the last presided over by director Catherine Hodgson. This year's opera is *Ariodante*, staged at the RCM's Britten Theatre on 8, 9, 12 and 14 March; the traditional Good Friday performance of Bach's *St Matthew* Passion takes place on 25 March. The final of the Handel Singing Competition takes place on 4 April at St George's; last year's winner, baritone Josep-Ramon Olivé, gives a solo recital on 30 March at Grosvenor Chapel, and is also one of the soloists in the concluding concert, the oratorio *Alexander Balus*.
www.london-handel-festival.com

THÜRINGER BACHWOCHEN, 18 MARCH–10 APRIL

Set in the composer's region of birth, highlights of the 2016 festival include cellist Sol Gabetta and Il Giardino Armonico performing works by Telemann, J.S. and C.P.E. Bach, choreographer Emanuel Gat's new production 'Gold', a dance homage to Bach and Glenn Gould (27 March), and Concerto Copenhagen's concert of the *St John* Passion (26 March). St Salvator's Chapel Choir and Emma Dame Kirkby give two concerts of Bach and British music (23 – 24 March), Ensemble in Residence Gli Angeli Genève give three concerts of Bach's early Weimar works (8–10 April), and the final concert features Håkan Hardenberger and Uri Caine as soloists in *Brandenburg* concertos 2 and 5 and re-worked versions thereof.
www.thueringer-bachwochen.de

BRISBANE BAROQUE, 8–16 APRIL

Established in 2015, this year's festival features starry artists from both Australia and farther afield. The connection with the Göttingen Handel festival (see below) continues with the Australian premiere of the 2015 German production of Handel's opera *Agrippina*, while there are recitals by harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani and American mezzo-soprano Vivica Genaux. Home-grown performers include ensemble Latitude 37, conductor Jessica Cottis and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in Bach's sacred and secular music, and a semi-staged production of Purcell's *King Arthur*. The popular '5x5x5@5' series returns: five recitals, five Australian soloists and ensembles, 5pm, AUS$5 a ticket.
www.brisbanebaroque.com.au

INTERNATIONALE HÄNDEL FESTSPIELE GÖTTINGEN, 5–16 MAY

This year's opera is *Imeneo*, performed in a traditional production by Sigrid T'Hooft and conducted by festival director Laurence Cummings. La Nuova Musica presents *Berenice*, while oratorios include *Messiah* (directed by Christian Curnyn, 14 May) and *Susanna* (the festival's opening concert). In between are concerts, exhibits and talks that take in the whole of this picturesque university town in Lower Saxony. The festival concludes with a 10th birthday concert for the FestspielOrchester Göttingen, the hand-picked group of baroque specialists which is the primary ensemble of the festival.
www.haendel-festspiele.de

OXFORD EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL, 10–15 MAY

This year's festival opens with Trevor Pinnock and friends performing trio sonatas by Purcell, Corelli and Handel; the latter's *Israel in Egypt* features Dame Emma Kirkby and the International Baroque Players. Stephen Darlington directs Oxford Baroque and the choir of Christ Church in his own edition of Francesco Durante's Requiem; Emma Kirkby and Jacob Heringman present English lute song with members of Dowland Works; and vocal

Mezzo-soprano Vivica Genaux will be performing at Brisbane Baroque this spring

Göttingen will play host to a wealth of concerts this spring

ensemble Magnificat perform music from the Dow Partbooks alongside an exhibition of the manuscripts in Christ Church library. Other events include a workshop on Tallis's *Spem in alium*, led by Jeremy Summerly, and a session on singing from facsimiles directed by John Milsom.
www.oemf.co.uk

LONDON FESTIVAL OF BAROQUE MUSIC, 13–19 MAY

The second instalment of the LFBM (formerly the Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music) has as its theme 'The Word: Voice and Verse in Harmony'. Highlights include a brand-new staging by the Monteverdi String Band of that composer's *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* (14 May) and performances of Handel's *Messiah* (by the Dunedin Consort, 13 May) and *Israel in Egypt* (by the Choir of Westminster Abbey, 17 May). Swiss-based ensemble Profeti della Quinta performs madrigals, trio sonatas and Hebrew psalms by Salomone Rossi, there are recitals by soprano Roberta Invernizzi, cornettist Bruce Dickey, countertenor Iestyn Davies, recorder player Tabea Debus, and harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani; and the final concert is given by the European Union Baroque Orchestra, directed by Rachel Podger.
www.lfbm.org.uk

CAMBRIDGE FESTIVAL OF THE VOICE, 12–15 MAY

This year's festival ranges from medieval Paris to 20th-century Hungary, with plenty in between. Voces8 are the Ensemble in Residence, presenting two contrasting programmes of Bach motets alongside music by Lassus, Giovanni Gabrieli, Mendelssohn and Praetorius; the young ensemble the Gesualdo Six (all recent Cambridge graduates) perform music by that composer, as well as works by Monteverdi and Ligeti. Vox Luminis, recent winners of the Gramophone Recording of the Year award, open proceedings with a concert of Protestant polyphonic masterpieces; John Potter, Rogers Covey-Crump and Christopher O'Gorman are the Three Medieval Tenors, exploring the Latin *conductus* repertoire. Tenor James Gilchrist and pianist Anna Tilbrook round off the festival with settings of Goethe by Schubert, Schumann and others, as well as canzonettas by Haydn and Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*.
www.cambridgeearlymusic.org

OLA RENSKA

Award-winning Vox Luminis will be performing at the Cambridge Festival of the Voice

AMIT LENNON

Florilegium to open the Beverley & East Riding Early Music Festival

BEVERLEY & EAST RIDING EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL, 27–30 MAY

This issue's cover artists Florilegium give the first evening concert of this year's festival with a concert of Bach's complete *Brandenburg* concertos (turn to page XX for a review of their recent recording); Peter Seymour directs ensembles from York in the final concert, of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. Elin Manahan Thomas and Elizabeth Kenny present a concert of 'Queens of Heaven and Earth', while the Cardinall's Musick concentrate on the Virgin Mary in music by Lassus, Victoria, Byrd and Palestrina (both 28 May). Presenter of BBC Radio 3's *Early Music Show* (and regular *EMT* columnist) Lucie Skeaping gives an illustrated talk on bawdy musical comedy from the 17th–century (29 May), and the Flautadors Recorder Quartet explore the connections between Elizabeth I and her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots (30 May).
www.ncem.co.uk/?idno=229

HÄNDEL-FESTSPIELE HALLE, 27 MAY–12 JUNE

Operas performed at this year's Halle festival include *Sosarme*, *Didone abbandonata*, *Catone*, *Lucio Cornelio Silla*, and *Publio Cornelio Scipione*. There are also concerts of *Messiah* (3 June), *Acis and Galatea*, *Belshazzar* (both 4 June), Purcell's *Dido and Æneas* (2 June); recitalists include Ian Bostridge (12 June), Anna Prohaska (11 June) and Romelia Lichtenstein (1 June). There's a gala concert by the Gabrieli Consort and Players (5 June), a ballet based on *Messiah* (10 June), and improvisatory concerts by Vincenzo Capezzuto and Soqquadro Italiano (4 June) and L'Arpeggiata (9 June).
www.haendelfestspiele-halle.de

Tempus fugit

***Adrian Horsewood** discusses the hidden depths of Bach's Art of Fugue with violinist RACHEL PODGER*

JONAS SACKS

I meet Rachel Podger at London's Wigmore Hall, a few hours before she is due to lead students from the Royal Academy of Music in a concert of items from Telemann's *Tafelmusik* – a collection of suites, sonatas and concertos for all sorts of combinations of instruments that, in its frivolity, couldn't be much further from what we're actually here to talk about.

Written in the last decade of the composer's life, J.S. Bach's *Art of Fugue* is a collection of fugues and canons all based on one simple four-bar subject. The piece has long had an enigmatic reputation – it was left incomplete at Bach's death, leaving generations of musicians to wonder what might have been.

'I remember first hearing the *Art of Fugue* at school in Germany: we all sat and listened together, and everyone took it so seriously! There were no smiles, no enjoyment at all; yes, at one level it's a very intellectual piece, a work of pure architecture, and I remember not quite being able to grasp it fully at first – but how can you fail to derive any interest, any joy from hearing each new entry in a fugue or realising just how Bach has played with the original theme?'

So how can performers guide audiences through the *Art of Fugue*? 'In our concerts we grouped movements together and stopped in between to talk about what was coming up, to help the audience to recognise where they were; otherwise there's a danger that it can all just rush past without them having any sense of what's going on.

'I remember once I was taking part in a Bach Weekend – although I wasn't performing the *Art of Fugue* on that occasion – and the musicologist Rodrick Swanston was giving a pre-concert talk on the piece. By the end he had taught the audience the main subject, and then got some of them to sing it at half-speed and others at double speed to demonstrate the ideas of augmentation and diminution – it was absolutely brilliant!

In a similar vein, we've changed the order of the movements slightly in places: for example, after the opening contrapunctus we jump ahead to the third one, then do the second, then the fourth – because even though Bach inverts the subject after the first two, numbers one and three are actually more similar than the other two, so I think it helps the audience to hear that straight away.'

The rest of the team for the recording comprised Johannes Pramsohler, who swapped between violin and viola as the second part in the *Art of Fugue* has a large range, Jane Rogers on viola, Alison McGillivray on five-stringed 'cello, and Marcin Świątkiewicz on harpsichord.

'It was so important to work with such good friends and colleagues on this, because the *Art of Fugue* is like no other music I've ever done – it puts completely different demands on you as a performer. For tonight's concert, for example, working with a group of students, encouraging them to come out of their shells, you need to be a very active presence, using your energy to inspire those around you; in contrast, if you're a soloist in a concerto or a sonata, you draw on the support of your colleagues in making yourself the focus.

'But the *Art of Fugue* is unique: each part is as individual and important as the others, and there isn't really a hierarchy of importance even though they're in different registers. So rather than being a soloist, or giving out lots of energy, everyone settles into a zone where you put aside all ego and find a common ground, so each person knows when to come to the fore and when to step back a bit. It's an extremely

rewarding way to make music, although also very tiring – we gave a few performances of it in the run-up to making the recording, and believe me, we all needed a strong whisky afterwards…'

With regard to the ending of the *Art of Fugue*, Podger and her colleagues decided, as have most other artists who have recorded it, to leave it unfinished (although they omit the closing chorale that was appended by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, and which is traditionally claimed to be Bach's last ever composition – 'it wasn't part of the original conception of the piece,' Podger points out).

'We did experiment with a completion of the final contrapunctus, but after performing it a few times, we realised that although it was very clever, it just wasn't Bach: no matter how hard we tried to keep an open mind and not consciously look out for the point where the original music ran out, we could always tell.

'So in the end we decided to go back to the unfinished ending, leaving everything hanging, although in concert we did play the final chorale, because it was actually almost too emotional to stop so abruptly and unexpectedly, and having the chorale – one of Bach's most beautiful melodies – was a way of letting the audience down gently.'

A review of Rachel Podger's recording of the Art of Fugue *will appear in the next issue of* EMT*; turn to page 38 for a review of her latest disc, Biber's* Rosary *Sonatas. www.rachelpodger.com*

BACH-ARCHIV LEIPZIG

The famous Haussmann portrait of J.S. Bach

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH TIMELINE

1685
Johann Sebastian Bach is born on 21 March in Eisenach, the eighth child of Johann Ambrosius, director of the town musicians, and his wife Maria Elisabeth (née Lämmerhirt).

1694
Bach's mother dies in May, his father eight months later; he moves to live with his eldest brother, Johann Christoph.

1700
Bach is sent to school in Lüneburg, where he studies the organ with Georg Böhm.

1703
Bach is employed by Duke Johann Ernst III in Weimar; he stays only seven months before becoming organist of St Boniface's church in Arnstadt.

1705–1706
Bach takes unauthorised leave from Arnstadt to visit Lübeck, where he hears Dieterich Buxtehude play the organ; Bach is reputed to have made the 550-mile round trip entirely on foot.

1707
Bach takes up the better-paid post at St Blasius in Mühlhausen; he marries Maria Barbara, his second cousin, in October.

1708
Bach convinces the town council to fund the renovation of the organ of St Blasius; in return, he composes 'Gott ist mein König' (BWV 74), one of the earliest of his cantatas to survive. However, later in the year he returns to Weimar and the ducal court; where his first child, Catharina Dorothea, is born in December.

1710
Wilhelm Friedemann, Bach's eldest son, is born.

1714
Bach is promoted to the position of *Konzertmeister*; Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach is born.

1717
Bach falls out of favour in Weimar and is reportedly jailed for a month before being dismissed. He is swiftly employed by the music-loving Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen to be his *Kapellmeister*. Works composed during his stay in Köthen include the sonatas and partitas for solo violin, and most likely the suites for unaccompanied 'cello.

1720
Bach's wife Maria Barbara dies suddenly in July.

1721
Bach presents six instrumental concertos to the Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt in the hope of gaining employment; he is unsuccessful.
Bach marries Anna Magdalena Wilcke, a soprano 16 years his junior, in December.

1722
Bach compiles the first book of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*; the second follows in 1744.

1723
Bach is appointed *Thomaskantor*, director of the music at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. Famously, he is the city council's third choice for the job, after Georg Philipp Telemann decides not to accept the offer, and Christoph Graupner is refused release from his employment in Darmstadt.

1724
For his first Good Friday liturgy at the Thomaskirche, Bach composes the *St John* Passion; the *St Matthew* Passion follows in 1727.

1733
Bach composes a mass (in the Lutheran form, i.e. Kyrie and Gloria only) for the court of Augustus III, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, at Dresden; these movements will later be worked into his Mass in B minor.

1734
The *Christmas* Oratorio receives its first performance.

1747
Bach visits the court of Frederick the Great at Potsdam, where his son Carl Philipp Emanuel is a member of the royal orchestra. He is given a theme by the king on which to improvise; he duly does so, and later composes the extended *Musical Offering* using the royal theme.

1747
Bach is admitted into the prestigious Corresponding Society of the Musical Sciences in Leipzig. As is custom, Bach sits for a portrait Elias Gottlob Haussmann; the resulting painting is one of only two surviving authenticated likenesses of the composer.

1748–1749
Bach completes the Mass in B minor, using the aforementioned Kyrie and Gloria and reusing movements from earlier cantatas; the work is never performed complete in his lifetime.

1749
Bach's health declines, and he gradually gives up his responsibilities at the Thomaskirche.

1750
Bach dies on 28 July; his remains are moved several times in the following centuries before eventually being placed before the Thomaskirche altar in 1950.

1751
The *Art of Fugue* is published incomplete in May; Carl Philipp Emanuel appends the chorale 'Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein', stating in his introductory note that it was dictated by his father on his deathbed.

Bloomin' marvellous

As Florilegium reaches its 25th year, ***Catherine Groom*** *speaks to founder and director ASHLEY SOLOMON about the highs and lows of the last quarter decade*

Twenty-five years represents astounding longevity for a small, albeit flexibly-constituted, baroque ensemble. With a current core of five principal players, though (director Ashley Solomon on flute and recorder; Bojan Čičić leading from the violin; Jennifer Morsches on cello; Reiko Ichise on gamba and Terence Charlston at the harpsichord), and realms of possibility far above and beyond the quintet formation, that's exactly what Florilegium has racked up. As they prepare to celebrate the milestone with a celebratory Telemann CD release (hot on the heels of the *Brandenburg* Concertos disc we review on page 41 – they're showing no signs of slowing down) I chatted with Ashley Solomon at the Royal College of Music, where he is Head of Historical Performance. Aptly enough, it was a group largely constituted of RCM graduates, himself included, who performed in that Florilegium debut concert in 1991 at Blackheath Halls, so he's come a long way, baby.

The choir are amazing, and through the incredible support of people who are buying into our project we've now bought enough instruments to have a Baroque orchestra in Bolivia

What's on the anniversary release? 'We've made five or six recordings of Telemann so he's already the most populated in our discography, but it seemed appropriate to perform the concertos for multiple instruments, showcasing a number of our brilliant core players. Then Clare Wilkinson joined us for one of the cantatas from the *Harmonischer Gottesdienst*, and we thought we really should record the first piece we ever recorded which got us the first contract with Channel Classics which was a Telemann concerto à 4 for recorder, oboe, violin and continuo. We recorded the last movement of that piece as a group that had only been around for two months, as a demo CD, and the great Tony Halstead came and recorded it on his DAT tape in a church in Highgate and we eventually had the call from Channel Classics based on this recording – and we just thought, damn it, we should record this piece, so that's the end of the CD and it's going to be launched at Wigmore Hall on 3 June.'

I wanted to hear from Solomon how he would define Florilegium's house style. Many seasoned directors return again and again to the same descriptors when discussing their approach to music-making. 'Resonance' for Skip Sempé, 'soul' for Daniël Brüggen, and so on. Go-to words among reviewers when describing Florilegium's discs frequently include 'brilliance', 'virtuosity', 'rhetorical drive' and, yes, 'speed'. Does Solomon agree with this word-picture?

'Partly! I recently listened to some early recordings of Florilegium from over 20 years ago, and boy, we played fast! And there was a real energy and vitality in the playing. I don't think that's changed. I think there's a difference in sound now which has depth that you only get from years of playing with the same people and living with the music for longer. I'm not suggesting that our first recordings were just a veneer, but we'd just left college, so we'd done our five years of study and we put this together and rockets just exploded – it was the most extraordinary thing that had happened – and that's fine to start with, but if you live with this music for 20 years you have to look for more than that. So although I love the adjectives you used I'd like to think that there's a depth in our phrasing and colour that tells a story that has a hidden meaning, and that on a second hearing you notice something different, and I think that comes not with age but with an experience of working with musicians and music, and your instrument. I think I'm a very different flute player 20 years on. And there are sounds that we produce as an ensemble which are incredibly gratifying, and I think the palette of colours we produce now is more diverse than we had. It's more layered. We still challenge ourselves, not with tempo any more but with musical phrasing and communication.'

There are few other examples of groups of similar constitution who have demonstrated equal longevity, so it's difficult to say whether or not Florilegium's turnover of musicians has been particularly high in context. Nonetheless, there certainly has been turnover. He is generous in his praise for Florilegium co-founder Neal Peres da Costa, now back in his native Australia. So has the mutating core line-up changed the group's sound?

'I think we do have a house style. I think our principles in making music are the same. But new people bring new energy, new concepts, new ideas and new programmes, and often the most important person for driving colour in an ensemble is the continuo player.'

In recent years, Solomon has been conducting a little more. Is he ever tempted to 'do a Frans'? 'No! Well, not in the same way! So conducting for me … in baroque music I tend to think of myself more as facilitator than a conductor. I don't want to give up playing, I don't want to give up teaching – it's an important part of what I do. I feel I'm quite a good communicator and people understand what I want to get musically from any text that we're working from, but that's only because I enjoy all the other elements of my career, and I wouldn't sacrifice those at all. I enjoy it, I limit how much I do and I know that I don't want to be thought of as ▶

AMIT LENNON

The line-up for the *Brandenburg* Concertos recording

a conductor ultimately.'

Does he have a favourite venue? 'Wigmore have been brilliant – I mean, we held this amazing position of Ensemble in Residence which gave us up to six concerts a year for three seasons, and that was really wonderful. We've had a very good relationship with them, I mean, over 60 concerts at Wigmore Hall – I suppose that's quite a lot for any group.'

A significant facet of Florilegium's work has been their Bolivian Baroque project, a major undertaking that has involved not only the small matter of editing, performing and recording the music of the 18th-century Bolivian mission churches both *in situ* and further afield into north America, Europe and even Singapore, but major matters of education in its performance for everyone from schoolchildren and their teachers to the young Bolivian professionals he brings on board – not to mention fundraising on a grand scale for musical instruments in Bolivian schools and campaigning for the music's status. Is he happy for the Bolivian project to be thought of as Florilegium's greatest contribution to the field of historical performance? 'Yes! Three of our 25 CDs are Bolivia, and I've spent the last 14 years going back and forth. My father-in-law worked out that it's about half a million miles – terrible for my green footprint. Bolivia's been a massive part of my life.'

How did it come about? 'The wonderful Piotr Nawrot, a priest, runs a festival, "Misiones de Chiquitos", in Bolivia, and Florilegium went out to play. We did a programme of English Baroque music, and we were the first English group to go there. Every group that goes is given a piece of music from the archive, and so on arrival in Bolivia I was given a piece called "Pastoreta Ychepe Flauta" – clever man! I'm a recorder player, and he gives me a recorder concerto that I'd never come across before to play! We incorporated this into our programme and went to the mission of San Javier; there were 900 people in the audience, some of whom had walked three or four hours for the concert. We play our Telemann concertos and Bach, and then we play "Pastoreta Ychepe Flauta". I start playing it, and almost the entire congregation sing it with me while I'm playing! Extraordinary. It prompted me to ask whether there was any more music like this, at which point Piotr laughed and said, "Yes, I have access to 14,000 pages of manuscript from the 18th century! Are you interested in pursuing this further?" This was in 2002, and in 2003 Piotr sent over 60 kilos of music and we put on a concert at the Wigmore Hall.

'Next came four Bolivian soloists, and so then I could say to our record company, "Wouldn't it be great to record this?" Jared Sacks, who's the director of Channel Classics, said it would be, and I said, "Good! We're going to record in Bolivia, in the church where this music was discovered, and they can offer you a generator but you're going to have to bring all your equipment out to Bolivia for this recording, and I haven't been to this venue yet, and there are four unknown singers who are going to sing all the solos with Florilegium" – and he agreed to do it! Then Piotr and I spoke about six masses by Bassani that he'd discovered, and I said that if we had a choir we could do them, and that became Arakaendar Bolivia.

'Two years later we were at the festival, Channel Classics came out and made the recording, and we managed to get CBS *60 minutes* to do a documentary on the programme which was shown on Good Friday across the states as we launched the disc – 14 million people watched it! You can imagine the knock-on effects; it led to a third project, and this time it was connected to a tour in Europe so we recorded the third CD in the Westerkerk in Amsterdam because we were touring Holland at the time.

'And it grows year on year. On even

JOHN YIP BRANDIES

years the festival happens, and on odd years we tend to tour. The choir are absolutely amazing, and through the incredible support of people who are buying into our project we've now bought enough instruments to have a Baroque orchestra in Bolivia. So Arakaendar now exists as an orchestra *and* a choir, and they collaborate for the projects that I work with them on. So it's still running, and new music is being discovered all the time.

'Like two years ago, inside a Bible that had been covered in paper; someone unwrapped the outer casing, and inside was manuscript music with text in indigenous languages, in Guaraní. We didn't think that existed, we assumed that the Jesuits who came to Bolivia converted the Indians to Christianity through music and through Latin texts and Spanish texts, but did not allow them to develop their own art form with their language, and now we're aware of this, so the project two years ago involved me working with a choir of Guaraní Indians because I insisted that if we were going to sing in Guaraní we had to have native speakers, not Spanish-speaking people from Santa Cruz singing texts in Guaraní, because the whole way you produce the sound of the voice is so different. So we worked with this incredible choir who didn't speak Spanish – just Guaraní.'

How are Solomon's own language skills? 'Hahaha! I'm hopeless with languages. God, I wish I'd done Spanish for A level, but who'd have thought? The rehearsals are run in a kind of Spanglish. I have enough Spanish to make them understand exactly what I want, but equally they're open-minded musicians and if I'm singing something to them they get the gist completely. You realise when you teach in your native language you become slightly lazy in how you describe things, but when you're struggling a little bit with a language that isn't your natural language you have to simply drill down to the kernel of the point you're trying to make and make sure they've got it. Music is a wonderful medium for that, because just by singing or playing they get the phrasing that you're after and they can understand context and colour. Travelling around the country with the choir enables you to see the most extraordinary things in nature and you can relate that to the sounds you're looking for and they get it. I should be fluent in Spanish by now and I'm ashamed to say that I'm not, but part of me is hanging on to that bastion of Englishness that I want them to learn from this project so that for future generations when I'm long gone this still has a life and other people from outside can come in and integrate with them and they can stand on their own two feet really and manage. That's my excuse anyway, and I'm sticking to it!'

British Baroque groups now 'doing' South America are ten a penny, yet Florilegium were indisputably among the first on the scene, possibly dead-heating with Ex Cathedra. What does Solomon think makes Florilegium's work enduringly special? I mention the fact that I can't think of another example of a group bringing the South American musicians themselves to the centre of their work.

'Indeed – for me, the investment is in continuing to raise the profile both of this music and of the musicians, so my only interest is working with Bolivian musicians. I have English singers who engage with the music, and they're fabulous, but the whole sound of the voice is so different. And the excitement! With Florilegium ultimately the idea was that Bolivia should become self-sufficient. That's the only thing. The previous president Carlos Mesa, who was a very educated man and historian who I met frequently in La Paz, said after one of the concerts, "What you're doing through music to develop the perspective of art and culture in Bolivia, I can only dream of doing as President!" and that was really wonderful.'

For Solomon, this is absolutely not a kind of post-colonial neo-colonialism. It would be disingenuous to suggest that all this isn't a great thing for Florilegium, but nonetheless he seems genuinely passionate about rediscovering a part of Bolivia's own cultural heritage for the benefit of Bolivians. 'Absolutely! When *Bolivian Baroque* Volume 3 was released it was nominated in BBC Music Magazine for one of the prizes in the category for the best choral CD, and it was runner-up to Ton Koopman's ABO recording of the last Bach cantatas, beating all the Oxbridge choirs, which was really amazing for the choir. They can now stand up on a concert programme and command the same respect.'

Looking back, then, does he have any high or low points that stand out? 'A high point certainly has to be the new recording of the *Brandenburg* Concertos, which are pieces I wanted to record all my professional life. At Florilegium's first concert in July 1991 we performed two *Brandenburgs*, and so that's been on the radar for 25 years! Low points – gosh! Well, I've got a tragic low point (perhaps it will be funny in another 25 years…) which was taking the orchestra of 40 players and Trinity College, Cambridge out to the Canary Islands to do a Matthew Passion tour, and standing at Madrid airport watching them unload the two chamber organs we took with us off the plane with no lift, and watching them just pushing them straight off the plane and drop from the plane to the ground; and as if that wasn't enough, then watching the baggage handlers jam the broken pipes back into the box and nail the box down as if nothing had happened! Thankfully we had the (now late) Peter Collins with us, who rebuilt the organs in two days! That sickness in the pit of your stomach, when you think, "I can't believe I've just witnessed that!" But it's been an amazing 25 years, when I look back – and it's full of really good times, actually, and I think if it hadn't been that then we wouldn't still be going.'

The light shineth in darkness

The international CHIAROSCURO STRING QUARTET speak with ***Robert Beale*** *about their name, their sound and their repertoire*

AGNESE BLAUBARDE

The Chiaroscuro String Quartet – Alina Ibragimova, Pablo Hernán Benedí, Emilie Hörnlund and Claire Thirion – are known for their dynamic reinterpretation of high classical style and for playing entirely on gut strings – a big deal for some commentators.

They are all alumni of the Royal College of Music, three of the present members having been in the original quartet, which formed in 2005; Pablo joined them six years ago.

'We were all doing baroque as a second study or joint specialisation, and Sir Roger Norrington asked us to try playing as a classical quartet but using baroque instruments,' says Ibragimova. 'He was the one who got us together, really. And it could have had something to do with the fact that they could gain extra funds for historical performance work then!'

'The name came from him in a way, too,' Thirion adds; 'he was such a charismatic character, and he used to talk about the contrasts in chiaroscuro paintings, to illustrate his approach to music of this period. After we gave a performance of the Mozart "Dissonance" Quartet, we decided we'd enjoyed it so much we would stay together. And if we were to carry on, we would need a name – so we became the Chiaroscuro Quartet.'

To begin with, the quartet needed time to build their own repertoire, and to find better instruments to achieve the sound they wanted. But now, as Benedí puts it, 'we play with the right sound, and which instruments we use is very much a secondary thing.' But what is the 'right sound'? 'What we strive for is a sound that some people may even find shocking, because of the extremes we push it to. But personally I find it's there in the music,' Benedí says.

And are gut strings the key that unlocks all this? They aren't exclusive to the classical period, after all – pretty well every string player on earth used them until the 1960s. 'The reason we use them is that they are part of the language we're trying to find,' says Benedí. 'I found I had to question many things that were imprinted on my mind – playing on gut is different from the easier way I'd learned before. And that helped me understand the rhetoric of classical style.'

It's not just the strings; bow technique has changed greatly over time, too, says Thirion. 'We play with 18th- or early 19th-century style bows. They're lighter and shorter than modern ones, the tension is less and the frog is more open. We want to explore the nuances of the music and question the technique we use, and that helps us examine the details of Classical articulation.'

'And the grip is different – with a modern bow you almost feel it's moving by itself, but we have to take more care over the beginning and endings of notes,' says Benedí. And how do you find that classical 'rhetoric'? 'It's to do with harmonic structure – "speaking" the phrases, getting away from the emphasis on "singing" that has been seen as essential since the classical period,' says Ibragimova. 'And looking for detail and colour – the beauty of small things.

We want to explore the nuances of the music and question the technique we use, and that helps us examine the details of Classical articulation

'I find on metal strings a lot of the little things are easily smoothed over: everything sounds beautiful, whereas there should be a little ugliness, too! Metal strings are made for reliability and stability, and these are good things, but you pay a price by losing the capacity for a richer palette or greater nuances. We don't want that…' 'And making contrasts is not just about decibels, but finding a different kind of beauty,' Benedí chips in.

The quartet has also learned from choral groups such as the Sixteen, the Monteverdi Choir, and Sir John Eliot Gardiner's Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique. So where does the Chiaroscuro repertoire go to, historically? Is there an end to their era? 'We don't actually think of dates,' says Claire. 'We see each composer in a different light. Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven are incredibly different from each other. We play Mendelssohn and Schumann too … and there are so many things to play there.'

Individually, they each have a foot in the baroque camp, too – indeed, they are all 'general practitioner' string players, and their homes are in different countries too. Russian-born Ibragimova is based in London, as is Benedí. Thirion is French and Hörnlund Swedish. They plan to give around one third of their time each year to the quartet, usually with two or three weeks at a time spent together. But adjusting from one style to another is still, in Ibragimova's words, 'one of the biggest challenges'.

'Vibrato is the way we were all taught. When you take that away, on a gut string, there's a whole world that your right hand doesn't know about! Handling that is what I've learned the most about in this style of playing,' she says.

Their first recordings as a quartet were on the Aparté label (distributed by Harmonia Mundi). Their accounts of Beethoven's op. 95 no. 11 and Mozart's KK 428 and 546 led to their being the first quartet to be awarded the Förderpreis by German radio Deutschlandfunk and Musikfest Bremen. A CD of Mendelssohn (op. 13 no. 2) and Mozart (K 421) was released a year ago, winning the 2015 Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, and they've also recorded Mozart's 'Dissonance' and Schubert's 'Rosamunde' quartets. Then they were approached by BIS, with a proposal for 'complete opus' recordings; the first project is the six quartets of Haydn's opus 20, out in a two-volume set in spring and autumn this year.

'We used to find Haydn quite difficult,' says Ibragimova; 'now we have found ways to get around the problems. We have found, as we played together, that we relaxed more and can trust one other to have freedom and spontaneity.' Hörnlund adds that 'it's a matter of being open and knowing where you're going, and when there's something completely unexpected it's as if one of us just winked at the others. It depends on the audience, too, and whether they go with you. It's quite weird at times … you don't always expect what's coming – but you have an identity as one of the four in the quartet.' 'Our way is to play together, disagree together, tease each other in a nice kind of way and then find our answers together,' says Benedí.

To read Robert Beale's impressions of the Chiaroscuro Quartet in performance, turn to page 48; www.chiaroscuroquartet.com

REVIEWS

THE BEST OF THE LATEST CDS AND BOOKS IN EARLY MUSIC

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Bach: Magnificat BWV 243a; Cantata BWV 63
Dunedin Consort, John Butt (d)
Linn CKD 469
★★★★★

Rarely, *very* rarely, a recording comes along that because of its content and level of performance seems to be *hors concours*. This is just such a recording. 'Content' here takes on special relevance, since beyond the bald heading above what we have is a reconstruction of Bach's first Leipzig Christmas Vespers as given in the Nicolaikirche on 25 December 1723. Thus in addition to *Christen, ätzet diesen Tag*, BWV 63, composed in Weimar in 1714, and the E-flat version of the Magnificat, with its inserted Christmas Laudes, there is also a Giovanni Gabrieli motet, congregational hymns (sung with spine-tingling fervour) and appropriate organ preludes. Because of the length of the CD (78 minutes), it is necessary to download several items to complete the service.

While the reconstruction is obviously of considerable interest in its own right – it follows a similar format to that adopted by John Butt for his 2012 recording of the *St John* Passion – it would be to little avail were the performances not of a high standard. As in his other Bach recordings, Butt favours one-per-part choruses, though in this sumptuously scored music (4 trumpets and 3 oboes in the cantata), he employs ripieno support throughout, something Bach is unlikely to have done. Both singing and orchestral playing (special kudos for Alex Bellamy's oboe solos) are outstanding throughout. All the singing is especially remarkable for the strong rhetoric and dramatic intensity it conveys, giving, for example, Bach's wonderfully contrasted movements in the Magnificat even greater point. What we are given is nothing less than an enthralling glimpse of Bach's Lutheran church at its most resplendent. **BR**

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CDs

Handel: Duetti e Terzetti italiani
La Risonanza, Fabio Bonizzoni (d)
Glossa GCD 921517
★★★★☆

Four singers and three continuo players collaborate on this selection of Handel's Italian duets and trios from the period (1707–1709) of his stay in Italy.

'Quel fior che all' alba ride' (HWV 200) is sung by Roberta Invernizzi and Silvia Frigato (sopranos) with the baritone Thomas Bauer. The intertwining counterpoint links the three voices in expounding what could be a fugal theme, and plays wittily on the meaning of the text in the manner of the earlier madrigalists. Both Invernizzi and Frigato have sweet-toned, full soprano voices (as opposed to the *voce bianca* style which is quite wrong for Handel) and Bauer's baritone gives the trio a strong foundation. Krystian Adam's tenor is only heard in 'Caro autor di mia doglia' (HWV 182) but has a pleasant timbre that matches the others.

The most astonishing of all these pieces is the fiercely chromatic 'Se tu non lasci amore' (HWV 201) in which all three voices sing ascending and descending scales in semitones, with some extraordinary clashes, all the while underlain by the excellent continuo playing of Caterina dell'Agnello (mellow cello), Evangelina Mascardi (a lush and plummy theorbo) and Fabio Bonizzoni, crisp and elegant on the harpsichord. **SR**

Aufschnaiter: Memnon sacer ab oriente
St Florianer Sängerknaben, Ars Antiqua Austria, Gunar Letzbor (d)
Pan Classics PC 10349
★★★☆☆

Benedikt Anton Aufschnaiter's surviving worklist includes both instrumental and sacred works, with the latter predominating and including the Vespers setting recorded here, one of two sets published as op. 5 in Augsburg (not Passau, as Pan's heading has it).

The title page gives the scoring as four concertante voices, two viols and two bass violins, with ripieno chorus. The *Dixit Dominus* and *Magnificat*, much the most grandiose sections, also call for a pair of trumpets. Letzbor also adds three trombones to support more climactic choral moments. The music, with its rapid alternation between grandly imposing choral blocks, contrapuntal passages and more melismatic writing for the concertante soloists, is likely to remind listeners of Biber's sacred works, though I would suggest it lacks the distinction of the best of his music.

The performances, probably on a larger scale than originally intended, make a persuasive case for the composer, though the soloists from the St Florian choir are not always pitch perfect. **BR**

Conversations avec Dieu.
Le Concert Etranger, Itay Jedlin (d)
Ambronay AMY 045
★★★★☆

'Conversations with God'? Well, perhaps more accurately addresses to God, there being only one true dialogue among this fine collection of 17th-century German sacred works. Interspersed are organ works by Scheidemann and Hammerschmidt, a string sinfonia of grave beauty by Rosenmüller and, incongruously in this company, one of the sinfonias from Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, lazily listed simply as 'sinfonia'.

The overall standard of the vocal works is extremely high, with highlights including Telemann's *Ach, Herr* (TWV7:3), an early cantata in concerto style, several impressive pieces by the underrated Andreas Hammerschmidt, and the most substantial work, Nikolaus Bruhns' four-voice cantata *Hemmt eure Tränenflut*, which makes impressive use of mimetic effect over the course of its five verses.

As the name suggests, Le Concert Etranger is a vocal and instrumental ensemble formed in 2006 from young performers of various nationalities by Israeli director Itay Jedlin; this would seem to be its first recording. It's an impressive debut, too, featuring highly assured instrumental playing, and some excellent solo and one-voice-per-part (as all this music demands) ensemble singing, the latter finely judged in works such as Hammerschmidt's *Erbarm dich mein*, an intense, chromatic *stile antico* setting of Psalm 51. Aided by exemplary sound, all the music is indeed vividly projected, and would have been still more impressively had diction been clearer. The notes are inadequate, concerned only with the topic that gives the CD its name while telling the reader nothing about the music or the fascinating stylistic mix employed by German 17th-century composers. **BR**

Il Trionfo di Dori
The King's Singers
Signum Classics SIGCD414
★★★☆☆

Most likely commissioned as a wedding or anniversary gift for the wife of prominent Venetian nobleman Leonardo Sanudo, *Il Trionfo di Dori* consists of a collection of 29 six-part madrigals published in 1592. Each features a different poet and composer, all conclude with the refrain 'Viva la bella Dori', Dori being the daughter of the sea king Oceanus and here a metaphor for Sanudo's wife, Elisabetta. If the format sounds familiar, it probably is, having been borrowed by Thomas Morley for his *Triumphs of Oriana* (1601), the rather better known tribute (at least in the English speaking world) to another Elizabeth.

The texts without exception occupy an untroubled pastoral world. Such poetry require little more than musical settings that reflect their largely languorous charm. All 29 composers respond accordingly, and it is a tribute to the special skills of such as Marenzio, Vecchi, Giovanni Croce, Anerio and Palestrina that their contributions somehow manage to stand out.

Otherwise it is difficult to avoid a feeling of sameness creeping in, an impression not averted by the performances of the King's Singers, which, though near-immaculately pitched, fail to avoid a certain blandness that perhaps misses opportunities to seek out a greater degree of rhetoric and colour. Notwithstanding such reservations, the disc can be recommended to those who enjoy undemanding madrigal repertoire. **BR**

Smith & Handel
Julian Perkins
Chaconne CHAN 0807
★★★★☆

I imagine the majority of those few who recognise the name John Christopher Smith will know him for his long association with Handel: Smith acted as Handel's amanuensis towards the end of his life, and after 1759 worked hard to establish the older man's legacy. Harpsichordist Julian Perkins has made the first recording of Smith's six suites for the instrument – a fascinating collection of works, none of which conforms to the traditional, dance-based suite structure; instead these pieces are more akin to sonatas.

Perkins has chosen two strikingly different instruments for this recording – a 'fruity' English single-manual for the suites in flat keys, and a 'powerful' French double-manual for those in sharp keys — and uses their specific characteristics imaginatively and captivatingly. The fifth suite (in G major) is utterly delightful, in particular the Rameau-tinted Minuet and variations. Turn then, if you will, to the second suite, in C minor: here is another mood entirely, influenced – Perkins suggests – by Domenico Scarlatti, and marked by chromatically ascending and descending passages. Handel does make an appearance, his own arrangement of the overture from his opera *Riccardo Primo* opening the disc and reinforcing the point that Smith's finest music is certainly comparable to Handel's. **AH**

J.S. Bach: Italian Concerto, Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue; D. Scarlatti: 16 Sonatas
George Malcolm
Decca/Eloquence 482 0506
★★★☆☆

The original recording dates (1953–1954) hint at what to expect; this was an era when playing on any kind of harpsichord rather than piano was considered the height of authenticity, and when early-music sceptics needed to be won over by colour and excitement. George Malcolm, keyboardist, conductor and general Renaissance man of his time, complied using an instrument lavishly registered and armed with a Venetian swell for crescendo and diminuendo effects.

This is an important performance-practice document. Documentation fails to name the instrument used – and the listed Scarlatti Kk 8 in G minor is actually Kk 87 in B minor, while Kk 33, although correctly numbered, is in D major, not B minor. But these are tiny slips in what is an invaluable and exciting reissue. **MR**

Salvator Mundi: The Purcell Legacy
St Salvator's Chapel Choir, Fitzwilliam String Quartet, Tom Wilkinson (d)
Sanctiandree SAND0001
★★★★☆

This CD is a pleasing and intriguing mix of the old and the new, with regard to all aspects of the recording. It marks the debut on disc of St Salvator's Chapel Choir, the main choir of the University of St Andrews in Scotland; the choir is joined by one of the longest-standing string quartets in the world, the Fitzwilliam, which brings its period-instrument expertise to works by composers associated with the Chapel Royal in London. Finally, it's the first release on the new Sanctiandree label, launched to showcase performing groups associated with the university.

Most noteworthy is an anthem by William Jackson (1730–1803), the youngest composer represented. 'Hear me, O God', despite Jackson's relatively early dates and his study in London during Handel's heyday, shows strong Classical flavours. Overall, the repertoire comprises both choral favourites (Purcell's 'Bell' anthem, Blow's *Salvator mundi*) and plenty that is more unfamiliar, interspersed with organ works performed by director Tom Wilkinson. The young choir has a light, agile sound, well-suited to this music; the Fitzwilliams provide their customary nuanced and rich playing; and Wilkinson is a sure hand on the tiller. **AH**

Biber: Mystery Sonatas
Lina Tur Bonet, Musica Alchemica
Pan Classics PC 10329
★★★★☆

Biber: Rosary Sonatas
Rachel Podger, David Miller, Marcin Świątkiewicz, Jonathan Manson
Channel Classics
CCS SA 37315
★★★★★

Biber's 'Mystery' or 'Rosary' Sonatas have long been considered one of the pinnacles of the Baroque violin repertoire: comprising three sets of five sonatas rounded off with a solo Passacaglia, each sonata is rich in descriptive detail and rhetorical figures, and – in an especial challenge to both the brain and fingers of the soloist – each requires the violin to be tuned in a different way, a technique known as *scordatura*.

Rachel Podger's recording has been long anticipated (not least by me), and years of study of and living with the works shine through in her radiant playing. From the opening of the first sonata and its theme and variations, this is a musical equivalent of the spiritual journey that the praying of the rosary should be: witnessing and sharing in the fears, joys and sorrows of the Virgin Mary. I found it intensely moving, particularly at the very end, when all the other instruments fall silent and the solo violin embarks on the remarkable Passacaglia — this movement returns to the opening, 'normal' violin tuning from the first sonatas, almost as if to signify the circular nature of the Rosary.

Spanish violinist Lina Tur Bonet's approach to Biber, while no less backed up by preparation and forethought, is rather more spirited and gutsy than Podger's, supported by a five-strong continuo section (including, unusually but imaginatively, harp, regal and spinet). Tur Bonet's playing focuses on the drama inherent in Biber's sonatas, presenting each one as an individual theatrical scena ripe with its own particular possibilities. Perhaps consciously in the same vein, her concluding Passacaglia is swifter of foot than Podger's, dwelling less on the incessant ground bass and more on the melodic filigree woven above it. For my money, I prefer Podger's more meditative attitude to the whole set of sonatas, but don't discount Tur Bonet's involved and arresting approach. **AH**

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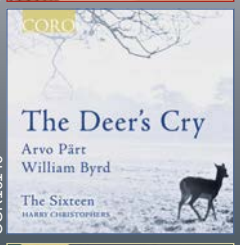

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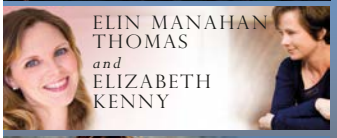

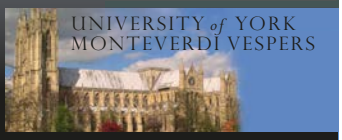

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Polonica
Michał Gondko
Ramée RAM 1406
★★★★★

A 'polonicum', for lutenist Michał Gondko, is 'a piece of music with Polish connections' – not only works by Polish composers, but also those attributed to Polish lutenists, or that use Polish in their title or incipit, or that are simply labelled as such in a source. Thus, this disc – Gondko's first as a soloist – contains music by both Polish and non-Polish composers from entirely non-Polish sources, showing how widely distributed across the whole of Europe was the idea of 'Polishness' at a crucial period in the country's history.

Gondko's playing is deft and fluid – it's clear that he has put years of love and care into this music, and is the perfect advocate for this neglected repertoire; it's been a long time since I've enjoyed a lute album as much as I did this. **AH**

Bach: Brandenburg Concertos
Florilegium, Ashley Solomon (d)
Channel Classics 35914
★★★★★

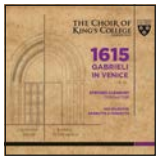
New or unfamiliar recordings of Bach's six Brandenburg Concertos are always eagerly anticipated with concomitant rewards and disappointments in varying measure. This recent version by Florilegium is richly rewarding and sits comfortably alongside those of the English Baroque Soloists and the Dunedin Consort to create a première league triumvirate. A consistent feature of Florilegium's playing is a rhetorical emphasis that is especially apparent at the beginning of phrases, and which enhances their clear definition. This allows the players to pursue a more legato approach to the music than many of their period instrument competitors without threatening the clarity of the musical argument. Sometimes, as for instance in the otherwise exhilarating performance of the Third Concerto I longed for crisper articulation, but the ten solo strands are presented so lucidly and with such vitality that little reservations are soon forgotten.

The subtlety, ingenuity and pioneering manner in which Bach employs his colourful instrumental arsenal alternately as soloists and ripienists never ceases to be a source of wonder and gratification. At one moment he seems to be reacting to a 'status quo', at another challenging it but seldom, perhaps, accepting it. Florilegium revels in the diverse colours and textures of the music which are further enhanced by the many individual contributions. The horns are splendidly robust in the First Concerto without jeopardizing the delicate sound of the violin piccolo played with sensibility by Bojan Čičić who leads the ensemble throughout. In the Fifth Concerto the harpsichord with its extended first movement solo is played with eloquence and fluency by Terence Charlston while Ashley Solomon's flute playing, above all in the Affetuoso is limpidly expressive and nowhere more so than in those magical bars 30–31. Tempos throughout are well-judged and ornaments applied with taste and restraint. Recorded sound is excellent and readers need not hesitate to place the discs at the top of their list of urgent requirements. **NA**

Anne Boleyn's Songbook: Music & Passions of a Tudor Queen
Clare Wilkinson, Jacob Heringman, Kirsty Whatley, Alamire, David Skinner (d)
Obsidian CD715
★★★★★

David Skinner and his team present here a selection of works from the music book – now in the Royal College of Music – thought to have been assembled in the 1530s and owned and used by Anne Boleyn, deviating only for the very last track ('O Deathe rock me asleep', often attributed to Anne in her last days and here hauntingly sung by the superb Clare Wilkinson). Many high-quality and often anonymous works from the early 16th-century French motet style feature alongside works by Mouton, Josquin, Compère, Févin, Brumel and de Sermisy.

The ensemble singing of Alamire is of an extremely high order, and the lower voices (six across the multiple tenor lines, two baritones and three basses) produce a sound which may in the most technical possible fashion be described as 'stonking'; at many moments (notably in Josquin's Nativity sequence *Praeter rerum seriem*) it is viscerally thrilling. The flip-side of this terrific yet slightly unremitting 'wall of sound' is that at moments I might have welcomed more frequent varying of texture throughout the double-disc programme, perhaps through more employment of the (to my mind, somewhat underused) instrumentalists. Kirsty Whatley's Renaissance harp contributed a complementary tone of gentle intimacy, and I should have liked to have heard more of it. That is a minor – and subjective – caveat, though, to raise against a fascinating and finely-executed disc, which I warmly recommend. **CG**



1615: Gabrieli in Venice
The Choir of King's College, Cambridge, His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts, Stephen Cleobury (d)
King's College Cambridge KGS0012
★★★★★

Dolby's Atmos technology allows height information to be added to surround-sound recording, capturing the acoustics of the recording venue with startling fidelity. Gabrieli's antiphonal and *cori spezzati* music written for Venice's Basilica di San Marco, and the cavernous yet warm and vibrant acoustics of King's, Cambridge could not, of course, be a more apposite combination of choices for the technology's audio-disc launch. I have been consistently astounded by the vivid acoustic capturing of King's Chapel on the discs across a variety of audio set-ups.

One must make a slight leap of faith, of course, to pass over the incongruity of the King's College choral sound in this full-blooded Italian music and to accept the recording on its own terms. Having done so, though, it's an exciting recording of this consistently brilliant music, with some delightful solos commencing with treble Gabriel May's pure and confident start to the disc-opener *In ecclesiis*. The core repertoire here is Giovanni Gabrieli's posthumous *Symphoniae sacræ* of 1615, and His Majestys Sagbutts & Cornetts, of course,

excel, providing due radiant splendour in the great *Magnificat*, and sombre tenderness in *Suscipe, clementissime Deus*. Hugh Keyte's reconstruction of the 14-part *Quem vidistis pastores?* is given a particularly sympathetic choral reading. There are some excellent liner notes by King's fellow Iain Fenlon, too. **CG**

Baroque Inspirations
Hideko Udagawa, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Nicholas Kraemer (d)
Nimbus Alliance NI 6299
★★☆☆☆

Few Baroque sonatas have suffered from romanticized interpretation as much as Tartini's 'Il trillo del Diavolo' or 'Devil's Trill'. The reasons are not hard to find. Foremost is Tartini's colourful account of a dream in which the devil appeared at the foot of his bed playing the composer's own violin. Then there is the absence of an autograph manuscript, thereby inviting varying degrees of editorial licence. Thirdly, while Fritz Kreisler undoubtedly popularized the Sonata his edition is far from any 18th-century code of practice, even including a contextually anachronistic cadenza.

Hideko Udagawa, a pupil of Nathan Milstein, has wisely opted for the earliest printed version of the Sonata since no autograph manuscript has been handed down. Where her performance differs from many others is in preferring to omit the notated bass part which the composer claimed was his true intention.

Udagawa's playing is uneven but elsewhere she is sympathetically supported by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Nicholas Kraemer's direction. Carl Stamitz's attractive Violin Concerto in B flat is allegedly a world première while Kreisler's pasticcio Concerto 'in the style of Vivaldi' is not entirely without interest. **NA**

As our sweet Cords with Discords mixed be
Consortium5 Recorder Quintet
Resonus RES 10155
★★★★☆

As you might guess, Consortium5 consists of five players, their instruments recorders encompassing a range from descant to bass. Little or none of their chosen repertoire was written specifically for recorders but then little of it was written for any other specific instruments – though viol consorts were probably uppermost in composers' minds.

All the pieces belong to the 16th-century English Renaissance or, in a handful of instances, the early 17th-century. The great names are those of Byrd and Dowland but a second league consisting of Christopher Tye, the Alfonso Ferraboscos, father and son, Antony Holborne, William Brade, Robert Parsons and John Ward provide comparably interesting pieces in this context. Bringing up the rear-guard in the household names are Osbert Parsley, Edward Blankes, Edward Gibbons and John Eglestone.

The musicians of Consortium5 achieve a well-balanced and integrated ensemble that is especially rewarding in the imitative In Nomines of which there are a dozen included here. The overriding tenor of the programme is serious and sometimes I found myself longing for the alternative timbre of a viol consort. The sequence is leavened, though, with several playful dances among which those by Brade and Holborne deserve mention. You do not have to be a recorder player to enjoy this disc but it helps. **NA**

Buxtehude: Membra Jesu Nostri
RossoPorpora Ensemble, Walter Testolin (d)
Stradivarius STR 37004
★★★☆☆

Upwards of 20 recordings of Buxtehude's meditative cantata cycle testify to its puissant expressive power. The work contemplates seven parts of Christ's body on the Cross in seven musically autonomous vocal concertos. They are nevertheless linked by their Latin texts and by the recurrence at the close of each cantata but the seventh of the instrumental concerto with which the cycle begins. By varying the musical colours and the size of ensemble Buxtehude provides the listener with affective contrasts within a loosely formal scheme.

While some ensembles perform the music on a one-to-a-part basis in which the five-strand voices fulfil the function of solo and ripieno this new version prefers a vocal texture of three or four voices for each part. The introductory sonata feels unsettled and tonally a little raw but the performance settles down well with some notably rewarding contributions from the voices. Walter Testolin seems a communicative director able to reach the heart of this emotionally satisfying music, aided and abetted by a sensitive ensemble of singers and instrumentalists. **NA**

J.S. Bach: Harpsichord Concertos
Andreas Staier, Freiburger Barockorchester, Petra Müllejans (d)
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902181.82
★★★★★

In 1908 Albert Schweitzer dismissed Bach's solo harpsichord concertos as 'often made with quite incredible haste and carelessness', perhaps swayed by the old prejudice that transcriptions, being 'copies', were of little intrinsic worth.

Today, thanks to Werner Breig's analysis of the autograph, we know Bach took extraordinary pains with the transcriptions, completely rewriting the harpsichord part in several places. We also value the concertos, both aesthetically, for their many delights, and historically, as the first notable examples of the keyboard concerto, a genre Bach virtually invented with these works.

Andreas Staier and the Freiburger Barockorchester bring a correspondingly serious creativity to their performances: they imbue fast movements with a purposeful yet buoyant swing and keep the delicately sketched slow movements taut and focused. Staier plays his favourite harpsichord, a modern copy of a 1734 Hass, a large, sonorous instrument with a 16' stop and a rich array of timbres, full-sounding yet never heavy. He adds attractive cadenzas to the D major, G minor and F minor concertos and his ornamentation throughout is inventively apposite. The flutes in BWV 1057 are a little hazy, otherwise the recorded sound is excellent, judiciously balancing harpsichord and orchestra in their exhilarating and joyous exchanges. **GL**

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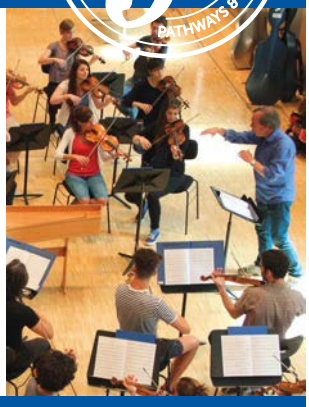
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Bach, Handel, Scarlatti: Gamba Sonatas
Steven Isserlis, Robin Michael, Richard Egarr
Hyperion CDA68045
★★★★☆

Steven Isserlis has already made a superlative recording of the Bach cello suites, so it's no surprise that he's now appropriated the composer's gamba sonatas for his instrument. In his CD notes he acknowledges that the cello 'perhaps throws up a few more questions of balance' than arise between gamba and harpsichord, adding that 'it is lovely for us cellists … to be able to play as lightly as possible without ever courting inaudibility.'

Unfortunately, although Isserlis does play with a wonderfully light touch, it is Richard Egarr's filigree harpsichord that courts inaudibility, often reduced to a background tinkle by the CD's skewed sound balance. This is more of a problem with the three Bach pieces, trio sonatas in which the harpsichord plays both the bass and obbligato lines; in contrast, both the Handel and Domenico Scarlatti sonatas were composed for solo instrument (probably violin) and continuo, so the harpsichord is supplemented here by Robin Michael's discreet continuo cello.

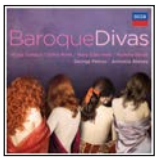
This is a fine album on its own terms, but do hear the Bach sonatas on gamba too: there are excellent versions by Manson/Pinnock and Savall/Koopman among others. **GL**

De Almeida: Il Trionfo d'Amore
soloists, Voces Caelestes, Os Músicos do Tejo, Marcos Magalhães (d)
Naxos 8.573380–81
★★★★★

I first heard Almeida's music in the early 1990s, when René Jacobs recorded his outstanding oratorio, *La Giuditta* (1726). The notes to that release began, 'Very little is known about the Portuguese composer Francisco António de Almeida'; sadly, 25 years later, this is still true. He was probably born c.1702 and is presumed to have died in the terrible Lisbon earthquake of 1755. His only opera to survive complete, the delightfully zany *La Spinalba* (1739), was recorded in 2012 by Marcos Magalhães, who now leads a similar cast, joined by notable countertenor Carlos Mena, in this world première recording of Almeida's 1729 serenata, *Il Trionfo d'Amore*, a courtly entertainment described as a scherzo pastorale.

We do know Almeida studied in Rome between 1722 and 1726, and his scores are thoroughly Italian in style. *Il Trionfo*, for six voices and an orchestra comprising trumpets, horns, oboes, recorders, strings and continuo, follows a typical baroque plot-line involving pairs of star-crossed lovers, but its 12 da capo arias and two duets, beguilingly tuneful and deftly orchestrated, show Almeida's original touch.

Sopranos Ana Quintans and Joana Seara share the pick of the arias ('In queste lacrime' and 'Leggiadra ninfa'), but they all make agreeable listening. Singing and playing are first class, though ideally I'd have liked a little more pizazz at times! **GL**



Baroque Divas
Romina Basso, Vivica Genaux, Mary-Ellen Nesi, Sonia Prina, Armonia Atenea, George Petrou (d)
Decca 478 8099
★★★★☆

Hiding behind Decca's misleading title and silly cover photo is an enjoyable disc of well-sung arias. What we really have here are four contemporary divas – three mezzos and a contralto (Prina) – performing a variety of arias nearly all composed for castrati between 1724 and 1774.

The booklet essay tries to corral the arias into a thematic framework, grandly titled 'the eternal clash of singers "ancient" and "modern"'. The 'clash' refers to the period, circa 1720–1750, when highly virtuosic singing became all the rage in opera. The CD features three arias written for the star soloists of this flamboyant 'modern' style (soprano Faustina Bordoni, castrati Farinelli and Caffarelli), plus nine others for singers of the less florid styles that flourished immediately before and after the fashion for vocal extravagance.

Decca's divas are equally adept at both 'ancient' and 'modern': Mary-Ellen Nesi spits fury to thrilling effect on arias by Bononcini and Gluck; Vivica Genaux dispatches with aplomb Veracini's absurdly bravura 'Amor, dover, rispetto' (an aria the notes claim is 'among the most difficult ever written for the human voice'), yet is no less impressive in Hasse's tenderly lyrical 'Fra quest'ombre'. Other highlights include Vivaldi's haunting 'Vedrò con mio diletto', sung with superbly controlled pathos by Romina Basso, and Vinci's heroic 'Ti calpesto, o crudo amore', which Sonia Prina delivers with strutting panache. **GL**

Monteverdi: L'Orfeo
soloists, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, Le Concert des Nations, Jordi Savall (d)
Alia Vox AVSA9911
★★★★★

Recorded live in performance at the Gran Teatro de Liceu in Barcelona and already issued on DVD, Savall's *L'Orfeo* on audio disc becomes an immediate benchmark. This is an opulent *L'Orfeo* rich in drama and contrast; the complete musico-dramatic article, utterly engrossing. Savall achieves a nigh-perfect balance between ravishing resonance and sound on the one hand, and gripping, pacey narrative on the other. The Act I choral ballet 'Lasciate i monti' is a case in point; thrillingly rapid, coloured by Pierre Hamon's whirling recorder and Pedro Estevan's lively percussion.

The continuo team comprises three assorted keyboardists including not one but two sets of infernal regals, four assorted chordophonists and four assorted bassists along with Andrew Lawrence-King's *arpa doppia*, and the result is a kaleidoscopic range of continuo colour and possibility.

The five trombonists depict the Stygian gloom splendidly. The late, great Montserrat Figueras opens the show as La Musica, while Arianna Savall Figueras makes her operatic debut as Euridice; a poignant line-up, now. Sara Mingardo is an affecting Messaggiera, and Furio Zanasi as Orfeo never allows 'Possente spirto' to become self-indulgent but controls the persuasive rhetoric with consummate expertise. Alia Vox's usual generous accompanying material includes essays on the Orpheus myth and photographs illustrating a sumptuous production that must have been the ticket of the year. **CG**

REVIEWERS: Nicholas Anderson, Catherine Groom, Adrian Horsewood, Graham Lock, Simon Rees, Brian Robins, Michael Round

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BOOKS

Memorandum XXI: Essays and Interviews on Music & Performance
Skip Sempé
Paradizo PA0012

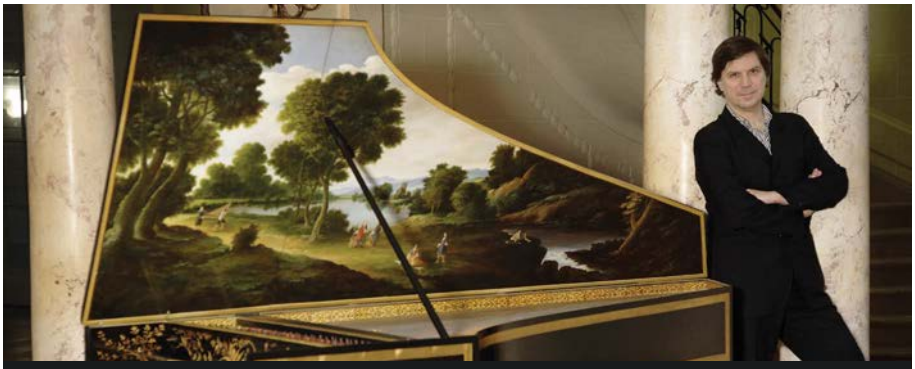
This substantial volume of writings and recordings by American harpsichordist and director Skip Sempé is a release on Sempé's own label, Paradizo. It is no mere vanity project, though, when the musician in focus has so very much to say that is worth reading.

Beautifully presented, the hardback volume lays out a great deal of Sempé's musical rationale and thinking in essays, programme notes and liner notes by the man himself as well as interviews with him and the odd bit of other writing (his teacher Gustav Leonhardt's paean to Flemish virginals of the 17th-century is included). All text is given both in English and in French. Keyboards and keyboardists feature heavily, of course, but by no means exclusively: Sempé's thoughts here range across the *stylus phantasticus* and the *canto meditearraneo*, Iberian text and translation, metaphor in French baroque music, the northern viola da gamba virtuosi and the 1589 'La Pellegrina' *intermedii.*

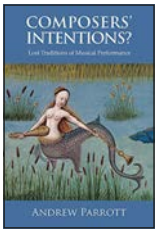
Sempé is at his most fascinating on the subject of instrumental resonances. For me, the special appeal of his work is in the paramount centrality of pure and beautiful instrumental sound; all other aspects of technique are means to that end, and the resulting evocative sororities bring me back to his discs again and again. 'The best instrumental virtuosi reject being forced into an inexpressive framework,' he says, 'because their instruments speak so much more effectively when they are allowed to take advantage of their full range of resonance without damaging the quality of the sound. It is not a matter of dynamics, but rather of acoustic resonance. The mastery of resonances on a solo instrument, in chamber ensembles or in orchestras is part of the lost art of playing on 'period instruments'. It is important to mention that this mastery of resonances is also one of the many secrets to great singing, and this is what instrumentalists imitated in the 16th- and 17th-centuries. Many such remarks offer keys to parts of Sempé's sound-world, and will be of interest to musicians of all species.

There is plenty of photographic material to leaven the verbiage, and Sempé is generous in his coverage of his fellow musicians. In addition, five audio CDs are included, addressing hundreds of works by 45 composers over six-and-a-half hours of music by Sempé's bands Capriccio Stravagante, the Capriccio Stravagante Renaissance Orchestra and Capriccio Stravagante Les 24 Violons, and fine colleagues. These are reissues rather than new material (fine recordings all, ranging through English instrumental pavans, embellished madrigals, diferencias and canzone, Monteverdi and the aforementioned 'Pellegrina' material, keyboard and viol solo works and French theatrical music) but it is very good to have a representative sample of Sempé's work to hand for illustrative purposes. A deeply rewarding issue. **CG**

RÉGIS D'AUDEVILLE



Skip Sempé



Composers' Intentions?: Lost Traditions of Musical Performance
Andrew Parrott
Boydell Press
ISBN 978-1-78327-032-3

Andrew Parrott belongs to the outstanding generation of performers/scholars that emerged in the 1970s and 80s. In recent years his activity in the concert hall and opera house has been regrettably much curtailed, with just the occasional reminder of what we are missing. The performance arena's loss has been scholarship's gain, with Parrott making an incalculably valuable contribution to some of the most important debates in early music.

Some of the fruits of his labours now appear in *Composer's Intentions?*, a collection of essays that were originally published elsewhere. At its heart lie the topics that have especially exercised Parrott over the years: the forces employed in Bach's choirs, transposition in Monteverdi's 1610 Vespers (and other 16th- and 17th-century vocal works), and the thorny issue of falsettos, related to both Purcell's so-called 'countertenors' and French Baroque music.

Throughout Parrott's writing two features stand out. One is the rigour of his scholarship, which time and again over the years has put the flawed or plain lazy thinking of his adversaries (often not too strong a word) to shame. This is particularly true of his work on Bach's choir, fiercely opposed by, in particular, certain German scholars. (Indeed my one criticism of the present book would be that room was not found to include the *Early Music* essay by Andreas Glöckner that Parrott so eloquently demolishes in his response.) The second is Parrott's work as a musician, work that has enabled him to reach conclusions where scholarship is backed by practical investigation. The transposition question is the classic example.

I am in no doubt that this is an immensely important book, one that demands to be read by all who practise early music. **BR**

REVIEWERS: Catherine Groom, Brian Robins

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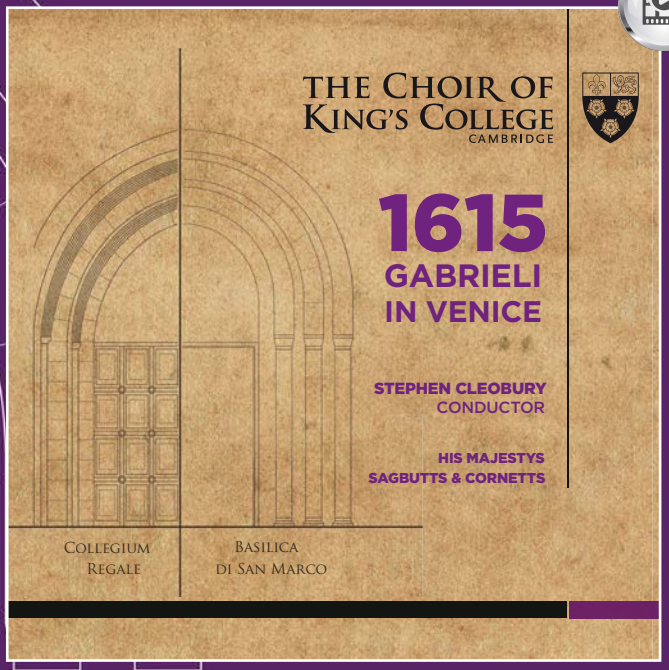

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CHIAROSCURO QUARTET, SHEFFIELD'S MUSIC IN THE ROUND, 14 NOVEMBER 2015

The Chiaroscuro Quartet's performance for Sheffield's Music in the Round series (at Upper Chapel, Norfolk Street) was in their central territory of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

First the 16-year-old Salzburger's Divertimento in F, K. 138, each of its three movements with its own rhetoric: the Allegro's dying falls fervently brandished, the Andante expressive in contrasts and pauses, the finale full of cheeky rhythmic life. Haydn's Quartet in A, op. 20 no. 6, is almost exactly contemporary (1772). Its light-hearted, conversational quality was clear from the first movement, and while Alina Ibragimova's perorational rallentandos were not all precisely matched, in other respects the quartet displayed extraordinary telepathy in phrasing and rhythmic elasticity. The Andante ('cantabile') showed careful attention to harmonic structure, and the Minuet had a delightfully rustic trio. Haydn's op. 20 equality of voices was ideally conveyed through the Chiaroscuro's transparent tonal qualities in the final fugue.

A change of atmosphere came with Beethoven's 'Harp' Quartet in E flat, op. 74 – later by 37 extraordinary years – with exemplary dramatisation of the dominant-to-tonic return at the close of the first movement development, and vivid contrasts in the Adagio, where first violin and cello indulged themselves in more than a touch of vibrato for the more lyrical themes. The Presto scherzo was fierce – possibly a bit too contrasted – but the finale pure joy, as serenity alternated with fury: Claire Thirion's cello introduced the whispered drumming of the sixth variation, bringing mystery to the approach to an explosive climax. **RB**

MINIMALISM UNWRAPPED, KINGS PLACE, LONDON: FRETWORK WITH IESTYN DAVIES AND NICHOLAS DANIEL, 18 DECEMBER 2015; PLATINUM CONSORT, 19 DECEMBER 2015

These performances were part of a series which looked at ways in which composers have wiped the slate clean, from the earliest plainsong to contemporary works. While Riley in C might be most people's idea of a minimalist piece, this series set out to show how a vast array of composers from the Renaissance to today may be considered, in one way or another, to be minimalist.

The first half of this wonderfully calm pre-Christmas concert contained John Taverner's Missa 'Gloria Tibi Trinitas' which worked beautifully for viol ensemble. Individual lines were attractively distinguishable while simultaneously completely fitting together in a near-miraculous manner.

Fretwork made good use of the dramatic thickening and thinning of texture by creating such a calm and still presence on stage; Hall One at Kings Place, with its striking wooden panels, was a fitting backdrop. The bass viols provided beautifully cavernous spaces for the upper lines of the ensemble to fill with the wandering melodies of the mass. Just close your eyes to float around Christ Church Oxford, where Taverner worked while composing the mass.

The importance of individual line remained to the fore in Sir John Tavener's *Nipson*. The 20th-century John T. always claimed direct descent from his eponymous ancestor and several similarities, especially when pieces are performed side by side, are apparent. The counter-tenor Iestyn Davies brought almost incomprehensible purity to the piece, singing with such

clarity that at first his voice was barely distinguishable from the serene sound of the viols.

Tavener's 'The Hidden Face', with the oboist Nicholas Daniel, provided continuity in its calmness … apart from for several oboists in the audience who were simply terrified by his incredibly high part and left the concert feeling not only calmed by the evening but simply lost in admiration for Daniel's stamina, technical prowess and musicality.

The relatively young voices of the dazzlingly dressed Platinum Consort tackled Arvo Pärt's *Magnificat* well, although I would have been far more at ease had they looked a little less terrified themselves. Lassus, Ockeghem and Morales followed, with notably artful performances from the alto Rose Martin, who stood out as a natural and talented performer throughout the concert.

We were also treated to the world premiere of *O magnum mysterium* by the group's composer in residence, Richard Bates. It seemed fairly evident that this was where the rehearsal time had gone, with the difficult harmonies and passages that any group would struggle to tune accurately, sung beautifully and skilfully, with the performers apparently far more at ease with the Bates than the earlier repertoire.

The real highlight of the evening though was a truly musical performance of Scheidt's *Puer natus in Bethlehem*. The singers processed on during the plainchant, sung by soprano Emily Owen, and took up a scattered formation on stage, transforming the atmosphere and winning an audible murmur of appreciation from the audience.

It was a pleasant evening's entertainment, enhanced by a few final festive words from conductor Scott Inglis-Kidger, whose lightness of touch and genuine passion for the music came through in an appropriately uplifting way, just in time for Christmas. More of him next time please. **EB**

MINIMALISM UNWRAPPED: THE SIXTEEN, 10 DECEMBER 2015

Minimalism emerged in the 1960s in response to the avant-garde of the time, dominated by the aleatoric creations of towering figures such as Stockhausen and Elliot Carter. Adams, Glass and Reich were the vanguard of this new minimalist style – a music centred on simplicity, repetition and tiny musical units. The choral world is separate from the world of symphony orchestras and contemporary ensembles because of its institutional cradle in the church, so 'Holy Minimalism' arose in the 1970s and 80s. A loose grouping of composers, whose standard bearers include John Tavener and Arvo Pärt, looked both to the east, in the Russian Orthodox choral tradition, and to the past, in the Renaissance renaissance and medieval choral repertoires, for their aesthetic touchpoints. Instrumental minimalism is highly mechanistic and abstract in essence – a minimalism for the church and the voice had to find its roots elsewhere, while responding to the thrust of seeking a 'minimal' music.

In *Spirituality and Holy Minimalism*, a skillfully formulated programme, Harry Christophers and the Sixteen explored this relationship in depth. In doing so the program also showed the progression from medieval plainchant with *Puer natus est* to plainchant interlaced with polyphony in Tallis' *Videte miraculum*, to more recent compositions such as Tavener's *The Lamb* which incorporates serial techniques in a minimalist, homophonic framework while melodically referencing the austerity of plainchant. The Sixteen sang with a full-bodied sound that paired precise intonation with often thrilling expressiveness. **NB**

MARCO BORGGREVE

Iestyn Davies

ARNAUD STEPHENSON

The Sixteen

REVIEWERS: Robert Beale, Elinor Bishop, Nicholas Bown

LISTINGS

5 TOP *EVENTS NOT TO MISS*

GET A SPRING IN YOUR STEP WITH THESE TOP EVENTS

LUTEFEST

17 March, Benslow Music, Hitchin

Lutenists of all standards have the opportunity to explore the treasures of the lute and lute-in ensemble repertoire. Also welcome are singers, renaissance flautists, recorder players and viols to help with lute songs, broken consorts and four-voice ayres with lutes. Tutors include Hopkinson Smith, Paula Chateauneuf, Roy Marks, Stewart McCoy and Jeni Melia.

ARVO PÄRT AND RENAISSANCE SACRED MUSIC

26 March, Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Aldeburgh

The Tallis Scholars come to East Anglia for a celebration of Pärt's *Magnificat* and more. With director Peter Phillips, the warmth of Renaissance music will be given beautiful clarity in the stunning backdrop of Aldeburgh.

MOZART EXPLORED

6 April, St John's Smith Square, London

Mozart was renowned for enjoying performing with his friends, and the London Mozart Players will be celebrating this tradition with Mozart Explored, a concerto incorporating trumpets and timpani, with clarinets instead of oboes. Pianist Howard Shelley will be leading a rich, textured group through Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat K 482.

LIGHT AND SHADOW: MUSIC AT THE TIME OF ELIZABETH I

12 May, St John's College Chapel, Cambridge

The Protestant tradition of Elizabeth I's time has shaped tradition and music heritage. Belgium vocal ensemble Vox Luminis will be performing to an award-winning standard, showcasing the likes of Sheppard, Ramsey and Tallis, for what promises to be a sparkling evening.

THE TOUCHES OF SWEET HARMONY

17 May, St Martin's Church, East Woodhay

Stile Antico return from their US tour for the Newbury Spring Festival. Marking the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, Elizabethan and Jacobean music will be the main centre point, with some Shakespeare-texted works by Huw Watkins and Nico Muhly, written for Stile Antico.

MARCH–MAY 2016 EVENTS

NORTH

BEVERLEY

Hexagon Music Centre

01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk

Following on from the concert on 28 May at the Toll Gavel Church this workshop offers singers an opportunity to work with Andrew Carwood on some of the repertoire heard in that concert and related works.

29 May: 10.30am

Minster

01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk

Music inspired by the Virgin Mary, this programme features four of the Renaissance composers – Lassus, Victoria, Byrd and Palestrina; The Cardinall's Musick, Andrew Carwood (d).

28 May: 7.30pm

Monteverdi *Vespro della Beata Vergine*, Sue Addison, Barrie Webb, Adrian France (sackbut), David Miller (chitarrone), University of York Chamber Choir Compagnia d' Istrumenti and Baroque Ensemble, with Gawain Glenton cornetto, Peter Seymour (d).

30 May: 7.30pm

St Mary's Church, North Bar Within

01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk

Florilegium's programme includes two of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, C.P.E. Bach's flute concerto in D minor, and an overture by Leclair. Ashley Solomon (d, fl, rec), Elspeth Robertson (rec), Bojan Čičič, Alice Evans, Elin White (vln), Jane Rogers (vla), Jennifer Morsches (cello), Carina Cosgrave (bass), Terence Charlston (hpsd).

27 May: 7.30pm

Performing on Renaissance instruments by Thomas Prescott, the Flautadors explore the connections between Elizabeth I and her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots with works by Byrd, Holborne, Dowland and Tye; Catherine Fleming, Merlin Harrison, Celia Ireland, Ian Wilson with Leo Chadburn (rec).

30 May: 1pm

St Mary's Parish Hall

01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk

Singing Simpkin and other Bawdy Jigs; an illustrated talk by Lucie Skeaping.

29 May: 2.30pm

Toll Gavel Church

01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk

Mozart String Quartet No. 10 in F K 590 *Prussian*, Mendelssohn String Quartet No 1 in E flat Op.12; Consone Quartet, Agata Daraskaite, Magdalena Loth-Hill (vln), Louisa Tatlow (vla) George Ross (cello).

27 May: 2pm

Elin Manahan Thomas (sop) and Elizabeth Kenny (theorbo) explore early musical portrayals of queens – saintly, virginal and secular.

28 May: 2.15pm

GATESHEAD

The Sage

0191 443 4661, www.thesagegateshead.org

J.S. Bach Mass in B minor; Royal Northern Sinfonia and Chorus, Paul McCreesh (d), Sophie Junker, Kitty Whately (sop), Anna Harvey (m-sop), Nicholas Scott (ten), George Humphreys (bar).

25 March: 7pm

SHEFFIELD

City Hall

0114 223 3701, www.sheffieldcityhall.co.uk

J.S. Bach Sinfonia from Cantata No. 42, Mass in G minor, BWV 235 (Lutheran Mass No. 3), Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F, BWV 1047, Mass in G, BWV 236

(Lutheran Mass No. 4); Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, John Butt (d), David Blackadder (tr), Rachel Beckett (rec).
12 March: 7.30pm

YORK

National Centre for Early Music
01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk
Celebrating the 2016 European Day of Early Music, Richard Boothby and Christophe Colin (viol) celebrate the music of England and France from Ferrabosco to Couperin.
21 March: 7.30pm

St Michael le Belfrey Church
01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk
Bach *Easter* Oratorio, Yorkshire Bach Soloists, Peter Seymour (d).
12 March: 7.30pm

MIDLANDS

BIRMINGHAM

Barber Institute of Fine Arts
0121 414 7333, www.barber.org.uk
J.S. Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, Brandeburg Concerto No. 4, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor, Concerto in D major, Telemann Concerto for 3 oboes and 3 violins; Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
18 April: 7.30pm

Cathedral
0121 262 1840; www.birminghamcathedral.com
Bach *St John* Passion; Ex Cathedra Consort and Baroque Orchestra, Jeffrey Skidmore (d), Jeremy Budd (Evangelist), James Geidt (Jesus), Greg Skidmore (Pilate & bass), Elizabeth Drury (sop), Martha McLorinan (alto).
19 March: 5pm

Symphony Hall
0121 345 0603, www.thsh.co.uk
Bach *St Matthew* Passion; Ex Cathedra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Jeffrey Skidmore (d), Andrew Tortise (Evangelist), James Rutherford (Jesus), Katie Trethewey, Amy Wood (sop), Martha McLorinan, Harriet Hougham Slade (alto), Jeremy Budd (tenor), Greg Skidmore (bass).
25 March: 2pm

Town Hall
0121 345 0603, www.thsh.co.uk
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
24 April: 4pm

COMPTON VERNEY

Compton Verney House
01926 645500, www.comptonverney.org.uk
A lively programme of Shakespearean songs and dances inspired by Compton Verney's multimedia Shakespeare in Art exhibition in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company; K'antu Ensemble.
24 April: 2pm

SOUTHWELL

Minster
01636 812649, www.southwellminster.org
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
28 May: 7.30pm

STRATFORD UPON AVON

Holy Trinity Church
01789 266316. www.stratford-upon-avon.org
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
22 April: 7.30pm

UTTOXETER

Abbotsholme School
01543 263 304, www.abbotsholmeartssociety.co.uk
Signor Corelli's fiery influence stems far and wide, determining the virtuoso violin fireworks seen in Handel, Vivaldi and Leclair's trio sonatas. The Brook Street Band; Rachel Harris, Farrah Scott (vln), Tatty Theo (cello) and Carolyn Gibley (hpsd).
25 April: 8pm

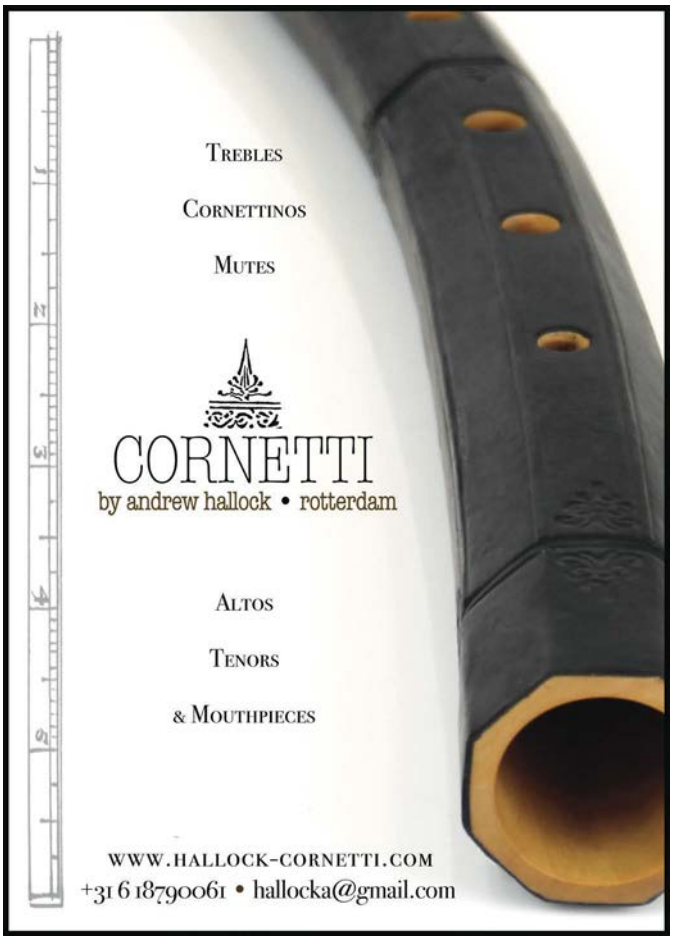
WOLVERHAMPTON

St Peter's Church
0121 345 0603, excathedra.co.uk
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
7 May: 7.30pm

LONDON

Barbican
020 7638 8891, www.barbican.org.uk
Handel *Orlando*; The English Concert, Harry Bicket (d), Iestyn Davies (Orlando), Erin Morley (Angelica), Carolyn Sampson (Dorinda), Sasha Cooke (Medoro), Kyle Ketelsen (Zoroastro).
1 March: 7pm
Bach *St Matthew* Passion, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, Sir John Eliot Gardiner (d).
26 March: 6.30pm
Bach Mass in B minor, Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki (d), Hana Blažíková, Joanne Lunn (sop), Robin Blaze (alto), Colin Balzer (ten), Dominic Wörner (bass).
8 April: 7.30pm
Bach Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D, Concerto for two violins in D minor, Cantata 'Bekennen will ich seinen Namen' BWV 200, *Magnificat;* Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki (d), Hana Blažíková, Joanne Lunn (sop), Robin Blaze (c-t), Colin Balzer (ten), Dominik Wörner (bass).
9 April: 7.30pm
Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor, Concerto in D major, Telemann Concerto for three oboes and three violins; Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
13 April: 7.30pm

Handel House
020 7399 1953, www.handelhouse.org
John Crockatt (vln) presents music by Bach surrounded by works from those composers whom he counted among his closest friends.
3 March: 6.30pm
Handel scholar Dr Berta Joncus will explore the music Handel composed for the stars of London playhouses, and how these performers influenced his works.
7 March: 6.30pm
A programme focussing on viol music set for the keyboard, in a variety of periods, from an English viol school in the 16th-century to the French viol master Forqueray from the 18th century; Marie van Rhijn (hpsd).
8 March: 6.30pm
The British Harpsichord Society afternoon masterclass with Nathaniel Mander. A chance to delve into the world of the Ruckers style harpsichord at Handel House.
19 March: 2pm
As part of the London Handel Festival, a special lunchtime concert featuring harpsichordist Laurence Cummings and recorder player Rachel Brown takes place in The Studio.
24 March: 12pm



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The Barokers take a journey through three countries and over a hundred years of music-making; Lucía Veintimilla (vln), Jennifer Tsang (rec), Isabel Esain (v da g) and Yeon-Jeong Jeong (hpsd).
24 March: 6.30pm
Arcata Baroque explore the life and musical development of Thomas Arne, through his relationship with Cecilia Young, a favourite of Handel who became Mrs Arne, and Charlotte Brent, Arne's protégé and mistress. Elin Harries (sop), Carina Drury (cello), Nathaniel Mander (hpsd).
31 March: 6.30pm
Trio Aporia premiere a new work by Edwin Hillier, alongside Rameau's Pièces en concert and Rameau-inspired new music from Geoffrey Poole and Duncan Druce. Trio Aporia are Stephen Preston (fl), Richard Boothby (v da g) and Jane Chapman (hpsd).
7 April: 6.30pm
Carole Cerasi (hpsd) explores some of the most exciting and pleasing keyboard music to come out of La Serenissima in the course of two centuries.
12 April: 6.30pm
Baroque Encounter explores the world of music written for the theatre, most notably Restoration Theatre, created and designed to be played and sung both on and off stage. Glenn Kesby (c-t), Lauren Brant, David Beaney (rec), Claire Williams (hpsd).
14 April: 6.30pm
Ensemble Ste. Geneviève presents music written in Paris around the time of King Louis XIV. Secular and sacred vocal music is mixed with instrumental pieces to capture the spirit of the time. Emily Atkinson (sop), Ben Sansom (vln), Mary Pells (v da g) and Martin Knizia (hpsd).
21 April: 6.30pm
Signor Corelli's fiery influence stems far and wide, determining the virtuoso violin fireworks seen in Handel, Vivaldi and Leclair's trio sonatas. The Brook Street Band; Rachel Harris, Farrah Scott (vln), Tatty Theo (cello) and Carolyn Gibley (hpsd).
24 April: 2pm
Serafina Steer (harp) presents a programme of harp music associated with Chiswick House, the 3rd Earl of Burlington and later Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire.
8 April: 6.30pm
Harpsichordist Menno van Delft will work with Handel House Talent recipient Aidan Phillips in a masterclass held in The Studio.
29 April: 11am
Harpsichordist Menno van Delft will work with Handel House Talent recipient Satoko Doi-Luck in a masterclass held in The Studio.
29 April: 1pm

Kings Place
0844 264 0321,
www.kingsplace.co.uk
Handel *Acis and Galatea;* The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d), Grace Davidson (Galatea), Mark Dobell (Damon), Jeremy Budd (Acis), Simon Berridge (Coridon), Stuart Young (Polyphemus).
7 May: 7.30pm

Milton Court Concert Hall
020 7638 8891,
www.barbican.org.uk
Lenten and Passiontide cantatas; Academy of Ancient Music, Choir of the AAM, Bernard Labadie (d).
24 March: 7.30pm
A day of talks, discussions and performances exploring the life, music and mind of J S Bach. Graeme Kay, curator and presenter.
9 April: 10.30am
J S Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, Brandeburg Concerto No. 4, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor, Concerto in D major, Telemann Concerto for 3 oboes and 3 violins; Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
13 April: 7.30pm
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
12 May: 7.30pm
Handel *Acis and Galatea,* Academy of Ancient Music, Andrew Tortise (Acis), Rowan Pierce (Galatea), Ashley Riches (Polyphemus), Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
21 May: 7.30pm

Royal Festival Hall
0844 875 0073,
www.southbankcentre.co.uk
The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, with the music of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, looks at the music and the social and historical context ahead of a multi-year exploration of this period by the OAE.
5 March: 10am
J.S. Bach *St Matthew* Passion; Florilegium, David Hill (d), Toby Spence (Evangelist), Matthew Best (Christ), Sophie Bevan (sop), Jennifer Johnston (m-sop), Nicky Spence (ten), Brindley Sherratt (bass), The Bach Choir.
20 March: 11am

St Giles Cripplegate
020 7638 1997,
www.stgilesnewsite.co.uk
Bach Organ Prelude and Fugue in E minor BWV 548, Motets: 'Jesu meine Freude', 'Ich lasse dich nicht', 'Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied', Organ Chorale Preludes on 'Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr' BWV 662 & 663; Bach Collegium Japan, Masaaki Suzuki (d).
9 April: 1pm

St John's Smith Square
020 7222 1061, www.sjss.org.uk
Monteverdi Vespers, Mark Forkgen (d), London Concert Choir, QuintEssential Ensemble, Rachel Elliott, Rebecca Outram (sop), Nicholas Pritchard, Bradley Smith (ten), Giles Underwood, Colin Campbell (bass).
7 March: 7.30pm
J S Bach Sinfonia from Cantata No. 42, Mass in G minor, BWV 235, Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F, Mass in G, BWV 236; Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, John Butt (d), Mary Bevan (sop), Meg Bragle (m-sop), Thomas Hobbs (ten), Ashley Riches (bar), David Blackadder (tr), Rachel Beckett (rec).
10 March: 7pm
Early Opera Company and Christian Curnyn explore orchestral music from the 17th and 18th centuries, and are joined by Sophie Bevan (sop) in Handel's motet *Silete Venti.*
18 March: 7.30pm
Bach *St Matthew* Passion; Brandenburg Sinfonia, Jeremy Jackman (d).
19 March: 7pm
Bach *St John* Passion, Polyphony, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Stuart Jackson (Evangelist), Neal Davies (Christus), Julia Doyle (sop), Iestyn Davies (c-t), Gwilym Bowen (ten), Roderick Williams, (bass), Stephen Layton (d).
25 March: 2.30pm
Mozart in London, International Baroque Players, Johannes Pramsohler (d, vln), Abel Symphony in E flat Op. 7 No. 6 KV18, Giardini Violin concerto in C Op. 4 No. 1, Violin concerto in D Op. 4 No. 3 Cirri Cello Concerto in F, Mozart Symphony No. 5 in G minor K 183, J C Bach Violin Concerto in C WC 76.
6 May: 7.30pm
Mozart Symphony No. 33 in B flat, Symphony No. 1, Clarinet Concerto, Michael Gordon Bassoon Concerto (World premiere); Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Matthew Truscott (d), Peter Whelan (bassoon), Antony Pay (cl).
7 May: 7pm

St Martins-in-the-Fields
020 7222 1061, www.smitf.org
Handel *Messiah;* soloists from St Martin's Voices, St Martin's Chorus, Brandenburg Sinfonia, Andrew Earis (d).
12 March: 7.30pm
Bach Orchestral Suite No 2, Harpsichord Concerto in F minor, Vivaldi 'Autumn' from the *Four Seasons,* Sopranino Concerto in C, Telemann Orchestral Suite in A minor; Feinstein Ensemble, Catherine Manson (vln), Robin Bigwood (hpsd), Martin Feinstein (d, rec, fl).
17 March: 7.30pm
Mozart, Bach, Gluck, Vivaldi; Feinstein Ensemble, Martin Feinstein (fl, d), Catherine Manson, Miki Takahashi (vln).
22 April: 7.30pm
Bach Mass in B minor, St Martin's Voices, Brandenburg Sinfonia, Andrew Earis (d).
30 April: 7.30pm

Wigmore Hall
020 7935 2141, www.wigmore-hall.org.uk
Purcell Royal Welcome Songs for King Charles II; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
3 March: 7.30pm
Folk songs and traditional music: Tenores di Bitti; Shaho Andalibi Trio.
5 March: 5.30pm
Purcell consort music; Phantasm, Jonathan Rees, Liam Byrne (bass viol).
7 March: 7.30pm
Uccellini, Monteverdi, Merula, Castello and more: Magdalena Kožená (m-sop), La Cetra, Andrea Marcon (d, hpsd).
8 March: 7.30pm
Join ethnomusicologist Theodore Levin and Director of the Aga Khan Music Initiative Fairouz Nishanova, alongside musicians from the evening concert, for a discussion with musical excerpts and a short film to introduce the concert.
10 March: 6pm
In The Footsteps of Babur: Musical Encounters from the Lands of the Mughals; Homayun Sakhi (Afghan rubab), Rahul Sharma (santur), Salar Nader (tabla, zerbaghali), Sirojiddin Juraev (dutar, tanbur), Mukhtor Muborakqadomov (Pamiri setar).
10 March: 7.30pm
Vivaldi, Albinoni, Ferradini; The English Concert, Harry Bicket (d, hpsd), Nadja Zwiener (vln), Katharina Spreckelsen (oboe), Ann Hallenberg (m-sop).
23 March: 7.30pm
Esperar, Sentir, Morir: Street dances and courtly songs in seventeenth-century Spain and Italy; La Poème Harmonique, Vincent Dumestre (d, bar guitar, theo), Mira Glodeanu (vln), Lucas Peres (b viol), Joël Grara (b drum, castanets), Claire Lefilliâtre (sop).
26 March: 7.30pm
Charpentier, Moulinié, Lambert, Le Camus; Les Arts Florissants, William Christie (d), Emmanuelle de Negri (sop), Anna Reinhold (m-sop), Reinoud van Mechelen (haute-contre), Cyril Auvity (ten), Lisandro Abadie (bass).
4 April: 7.30pm
Marais Suite from *Alcione,* Haydn Symphony No. 44 *Trauer,* Rameau Suite from *Les Boreades;* Mozart Symphony No. 29 in A; The English Concert, Christian Curnyn (d, hpsd).
26 April: 7.30pm

SOUTH EAST

ALDEBURGH

Aldeburgh Parish Church
01728 452807, aldeburghparishchurch.org.uk
The World Encompassed: Drake's circumnavigation in music by Orlando Gough, Robert Parsons, Robert White; Fretwork.
26 March: 11am

BASINGSTOKE

The Anvil
01256 844244, www.anvilarts.org.uk
Mozart Symphony No. 33 in B flat, Symphony No. 1 in E flat, Clarinet Concerto in A, Michael Gordon Bassoon Concerto (world premiere tour), Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Matthew Truscott (d, vln), Peter Whelan (bassoon), Antony Pay (cl).
5 May: 7.45pm

BURY ST EDMUNDS

The Apex
01284 758000, www.theapex.co.uk
J S Bach Brandenburg Concerto No.1, Brandenburg Concerto No 4, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor, Concerto in D major, Telemann Concerto for 3 oboes and 3 violins; Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
15 April: 7.30pm
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
23 May: 7.30pm

CAMBRIDGE

Jesus College
01223 847330, cambridgeearlymusic.org
VOCES8 present a programme of 16th-century music centered around Lassus' *Lectiones* which sets the nine readings from the Book of Job that were recited at Matins of the Office of the Dead.
15 May: 1pm

Little St Mary's Church
01223 847330, cambridgeearlymusic.org
Three Medieval Tenors; John Potter, Christopher O'Gorman and Rogers Covey-Crump explore the forgotten song of the Middle Ages.
14 May: 3.30pm

St Bene't's Church
01223 847330, www.CambridgeEarlyMusic.org
Music for two bass viols was popular first in England then across the channel, providing a continuity of music from Ferrabosco to Couperin. L'Entente Cordiale: Christopher Coin, Richard Boothby.
19 March: 7.30pm
The Gesualdo Six present the programme Old & New: Monteverdi, Gesualdo & Ligeti.
13 May: 1pm

St John's College Chapel
01223 847330, www.CambridgeEarlyMusic.org
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d)
8 April

Trinity College
01223 847330, cambridgeearlymusic.org
Four Bach motets are programmed alongside music by Giovanni Gabrieli, Praetorius and Felix Mendelssohn, who was instrumental in the revival of Bach's music.
13 May: 7.30pm

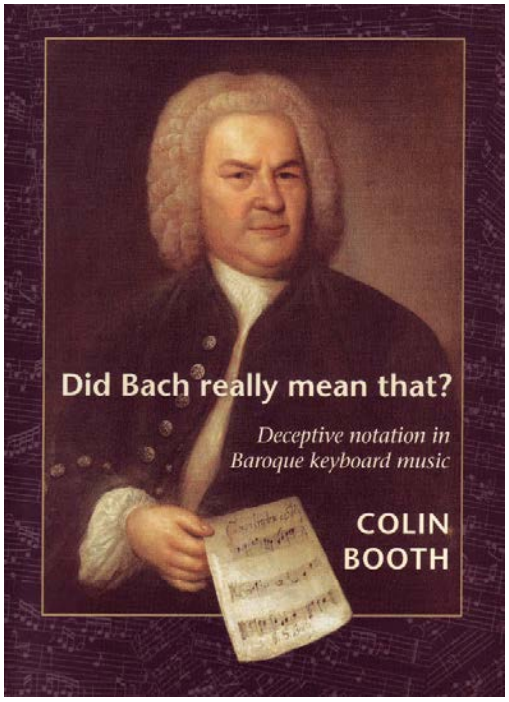
West Road Concert Hall
01223 335184, www.westroad.org
Lenten and Passiontide cantatas; Academy of Ancient Music, Choir of the AAM, Bernard Labadie (d).
26 March: 7.30pm
J S Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, Brandeburg Concerto No. 4, Vivaldi Concerto in G minor, Concerto in D major, Telemann Concerto for 3 oboes and 3 violins; Academy of Ancient Music, Richard Egarr (d, hpsd).
14 April: 7.30pm
Handel *Acis and Galatea*; Richard Egarr (d, hpsd), Andrew Tortise (Acis), Rowan Pierce (Galatea), Ashley Riches (Polyphemus).
20 May: 7.30pm

COLCHESTER

St Teresa's Church, Lexden
01206 820813, www.colchesterchamberchoir.org.uk
Stabat Mater, Italian Baroque and Renaissance music for Passiontide including music by Leo, Lotti, Gesualdo and Palestrina. Colchester Chamber Choir, Roderick Earle (d).
19 March: 7.30pm

CROYDON

Minster
01904 658338, ncem.co.uk
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
11 May: 7.30pm



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For more details, reviews, and to buy online, visit **www.didbach.co.uk**

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HITCHIN
Benslow Music Trust
01462 459446, www.benslow.org
The annual Baroque Opera Project returns in 2016 with John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*. Tutors: Dionysios Kyropoulos, Julian Perkins, Judy Tarling, Henrik Persson, Andrew Radley, Thomas Adby.
4-10 April
Practical harpsichord tuning workshop; tutor: Andrew Wooderson.
23 April
John Rowlands-Pritchard introduces singers of all faiths and none to some of the repertoire of Gregorian chant.
25-28 April
Dr Penelope Cave's practical weekend harpsichord course will encompass the art of preluding and, as well as unpacking the composition of the fugue, there will be advice on how to interpret and perform contrapuntal music.
6-8 May
This weekend of 16th- and 17th-century music for voices and viols will include madrigals and motets by various composers, as well as some larger scale works. Tutors: Alison Crum, Peter Syrus.
13-15 May
Church music, sung in town and country during the 18th and 19th centuries to whatever instrumental accompaniment might be available. Francis Roads's course is especially suitable for singers and players of wind and bowed string instruments and will be of special interest to choirs looking to expand their repertoire with straightforward but rewarding material.
13-15 May

OXFORD
Christ Church Cathedral
01865 276155, www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
15 April: 8pm

Sheldonian Theatre
01865 277 299, www.ox.ac.uk/sheldonian
Vivaldi *The Four Seasons* and concerti per il violino in tromba marina; La Serenissima, Adrian Chandler (d, vln, & violino in tromba marina), Peter Whelan (bassoon).
20 May: 7.30pm

PETERBOROUGH
Cathedral
01904 658338, ncem.co.uk,
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
20 May: 7.30pm

ROCHESTER
Cathedral
01634 843366, www.rochestercathedral.org
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
27 May: 7.30pm

SAFFRON WALDEN
Saffron Hall
01799 588545, saffronhall.com
Scarlatti, Vivaldi, Albinoni, Pergolesi *Stabat Mater*; Harry Bicket (d, hpsd), Nadja Zwiener (vln), Katharina Spreckelsen (oboe), Anna Devin (sop), Robin Blaze (c-t).
20 March: 7.30pm

ST ALBANS
Cathedral
01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
9 April: 7.30pm

WYMONDHAM
Abbey
01953 602269, www.wymondhamabbey.org.uk
Handel *Theodora*; The Brook Street Band and friends.
16 April: 7.30pm

SOUTH WEST

BRADFORD ON AVON
Wiltshire Music Centre
01225 860100, www.wiltshiremusic.org.uk
Mozart Symphony No. 33 in B flat, Symphony No. 1 in E flat, Clarinet Concerto in A, Michael Gordon Bassoon Concerto (world premiere tour), Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Matthew Truscott (d, vln), Peter Whelan (bassoon), Antony Pay (cl).
6 May: 7.30pm

CHRISTCHURCH
Priory
01202 499199, www.regentcentre.co.uk
Monteverdi *Vespers*; Voces8, Bournemouth Bach Choir, QuintEssential Sackbutt & Cornett Ensemble, Tim Hooper (d).
19 March: 7.30pm

EXETER
Cathedral
01392 255573, www.thesixteen.com
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
12 May: 7.30pm

HEREFORD
Cathedral
01432 374200, www.herefordcathedral.org
To mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary in April 2016, Ex Cathedra in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the Garrick Ode. Music by Arne and Beamish; Ex Cathedra & Academy of Vocal Music, The City Musick, Jeffrey Skidmore (d).
6 May: 7.30pm

TOTNES
St Mary's Church
01803 849414, www.totnesearlymusic.org.uk
Consortium5's concert includes works by Dowland, Coperano, Byrd and Gibbons, played on an array of different sized recorders.
5 March: 7.30pm

Musica Domestica presents a programme of music from the late 17th and 18th centuries. Kate Semmens (sop), Steven Devine (hpsd), Matthew Truscott (vln), Rebecca Truscott (cello).
16 April: 7.30pm

TRURO
Cathedral
01872 276782, www.thesixteen.com
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
13 May: 7.30pm

WINCHESTER
Cathedral
01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
28 May: 7.30pm

WALES

LLANDAFF
Cathedral
029 2056 4554, www.thesixteen.com
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
14 May: 7.30pm

ST DAVID'S
Cathedral
01904 651 485, www.ncem.co.uk
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
31 May: 7.30pm

SCOTLAND

PERTH
St John's Kirk
01904 658338, www.ncem.co.uk
The Choral Pilgrimage; Byrd, Arvo Pärt, Tallis; The Sixteen, Harry Christophers (d).
24 May: 7.30pm

The deadline for supplying information for the listings section in the June–August 2016 issue is 4 April 2016.
Please send brief details to:
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In the June–August issue:

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- *EMT* catches up with the Three Medieval Tenors as they complete their survey of the conductus repertoire
- Bridget Cunningham talks about her on-going Handel series

Q&A – Sally Beamish and Jeffrey Skidmore

ASHLEY COOMBES

ADRIAN BURROWS

In 1769, the actor and impresario David Garrick organised a Shakespeare Jubilee in Stratford-upon-Avon, the highlight of which was Garrick's own specially written Shakespeare Ode with music by Thomas Arne. To mark the 400th anniversary in April of Shakespeare's death, Ex Cathedra and director Jeffrey Skidmore will tour a staged, period-instrument performance of the *Garrick Ode*. Alongside will be a new Ode written by Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy, set to music by Sally Beamish for Ex Cathedra, children's choir and a 'broken consort' of instruments that Shakespeare would have recognised.

HOW DID THIS PROJECT COME ABOUT?

JS: For many years I've been looking for an opportunity to commission a community work along the lines of Britten's masterpiece *Noye's Fludde*, which Ex Cathedra has performed many times; the Shakespeare celebrations with their universal appeal and desire for accessibility provide a perfect vehicle.

I have long been interested in encouraging composers to write for period instruments, or unusual combinations of instruments. Alec Roth's cantata *A Time to Dance*, recently released on the Hyperion label, was written for Ex Cathedra's full Baroque orchestra as a companion piece for Bach's *Magnificat*. James MacMillan's *Seven Angels* (2015) was written for choir and biblical instruments. Sally Beamish's *A Shakespeare Masque* is written for treble viol, bass viol, flute, cittern, bandora and lute, instruments much favoured in the Elizabethan period. This is a wonderful Renaissance ensemble brought to the the attention of modern ears.

Our commission is for the whole Ex Cathedra family – Chamber Choir, Consort, soloists, Academy of Vocal Music and local school choirs; there is even a part for the audience! Shakespeare and Garrick are local heroes and the 1769 celebration put Shakespeare and Stratford on the national and international map.

WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE WRITING FOR PERIOD INSTRUMENTS?

SB: I have written for viols before (for Fretwork), but never for cittern, lute or bandora. This was a huge challenge, and I was very grateful to Jacob Heringman (the cittern player in the premiere performances) for spending a great deal of time looking over parts with me, and advising me about voicing. Also to William Lyons, who checked the flute and recorder parts, and gave me valuable information before I started work.

A major concern I had was that of the balance between the voices (particularly when the audience joins in!) and the Renaissance instruments. We are solving that by using amplification, which in itself will give an exciting new perspective on the instruments that Shakespeare knew.

HOW DOES THIS NEW ODE TO SHAKESPEARE RELATE TO ITS ARNE/GARRICK PRECURSOR, IF AT ALL?

SB: Carol Ann's poems relate to different aspects of Shakespeare's life and work, and celebrate him as a unique genius. In this respect, they do in a way relate to the Garrick. But the tone is different – the poems are powerful, moving, celebratory, but not humble or 'worshipful'. They are earthy and joyful, with touches of humour, and many playful references.

After writing the Shakespeare Masque, I turned to the two 'missing' choruses from the Thomas Arne *Ode*. Jeffrey had asked me to set the two verses written by Garrick with no surviving music by Arne. I decided to create a link between the two pieces by revisiting themes from the the newly-completed Masque. I have followed the key structure of the Ode, so that it will begin and end in D major.

WILL WE HEAR ANY OF SHAKESPEARE'S OWN WORDS AS PART OF THE PERFORMANCE?

JS: Yes, but not necessarily in the right order! Garrick in his Ode alludes to several works by the Bard and some of the great roles created for his acting profession. Duffy in her seven poems written as *A Shakespeare Masque* makes beautiful reference to Shakespeare's life and works.
SB: Carol Ann has used structures which relate closely to Shakespeare's forms, while offering a fresh perspective. Equally, I have drawn on the dance forms of Shakespeare's time, adding the colour of more adventurous harmonies; setting up formal expectations and then often subverting them.

The first performance of the 'Shakespeare Odes' programme will be on 22 April at Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon. For more information, visit www.sallybeamish.com and www.excathedra.co.uk.

ADRIAN HORSEWOOD

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